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ABSTRACT

Preschool and kindergarten teachers have the responsibility of supporting children as they learn and develop. This guide is designed to help North Carolina preschool and kindergarten teachers and administrators establish and maintain high quality programs, frame the broad issues regarding early childhood curriculum and instruction, describe major curricular and instructional approaches, and provide a framework for local program planners. Information is based on position papers developed by early childhood educators and reviewed for alignment with North Carolina State Board of Education policies. Chapter 1 of the guide, "How Do I Get To Know the Children in My Class?" presents information on child development, learning, and strategies for building partnerships with parents/caregivers and learning about the community and individual children. Chapter 2, "What Do I Teach?" examines expectations for cognitive development, curriculum guidelines and models, guidelines for appropriate content, and conceptual organizers. Chapter 3, "How Do I Teach?" considers the physical and interpersonal environment, scheduling, and developmental stages. Chapter 4, "How Do I Assess the Children's Progress?" addresses conditions for effective assessment; suggests techniques for observing, documenting, recording, and organizing information; and makes suggestions for drawing appropriate conclusions from information, modifying instruction, and sharing information. A lengthy discussion of content areas connects the preschool program with existing North Carolina Standard Course of Study K-12. The guide's appendix includes forms, guidance for inclusion of children with various disabilities, relevant state guidelines and statutes, and an article (Patricia Miller) regarding issues in early childhood education. Each chapter contains references. (Author/KB)

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Guide for the Early Years

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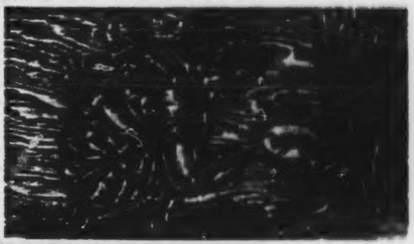

Public Schools of North Carolina

State Board of Education
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

The North Carolina Guide for the Early Years

Public Schools of North Carolina
State Board of Education
North Carolina Department of Public Education

Division of Instructional Services
Early Childhood Team

Raleigh, NC
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Replaces *Circle of Childhood*

4

Foreword

Teachers in North Carolina's early childhood programs make great contributions every day to the future of our young people. We know that the early years are more important than any other period in children's lives for development. We also know that it is during these years that children learn to value and love learning. Therefore, we must create classrooms to make learning occur, lead children to cooperate with others, to value a democratic way of life, and develop the social skills that assure success in life. We must support children as they learn and develop. The programs we provide for them and the experiences we create ensure this early foundation. The challenge for us as early childhood educators is to make this happen.

We promise the children and teachers of North Carolina to support their efforts by advocating for policies, laws and regulations to enhance the quality of life for young children. Such guidance supports the rights of children to live and learn in safe environments—ones that are responsive to their development and needs. By doing so we can best appreciate and respect each child's uniqueness, contributions, and potential.

Given our challenge, it is with pleasure, therefore, that we dedicate the *Guide* to the children of North Carolina and the very special group of professional educators who are entrusted with their learning and care. We wish you every success as you pursue the great adventure of education together.

Michael E. Ward
Superintendent
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

Jay M. Robinson
Chairman
State Board of Education

Contents

Chapter 1 **How Do I Get to Know the Children in My Class?**
Child Development and Learning 1.4
Each Child's Family and Community 1.14
The Individual Child 1.25
References 1.34

Chapter 2 **What Do I Teach?**
Widely Held Expectations.. 2.4
Early Childhood Curriculum 2.10
Curriculum Models 2.15
Disciplines 2.29
Conceptual Organizers... 2.30
Summary... 2.33
References 2.34

Chapter 3 **How Do I Teach?**
The Environment 3.3
Scheduling 3.16
The Interpersonal Setting 3.26
Stages of Development 3.33
Summary.. 3.44
References 3.45

Chapter 4 **How Do I Assess the Children's Progress?**
Plans 4.10
Techniques 4.11
Organizing Information 4.17
Drawing Conclusion 4.22
Planning or Modifying for the Classroom 4.26
Sharing Information 4.29
Summary.. 4.37
References 4.39

Disciplines **D.1**
Appendix **A.1**

7

Preface

The North Carolina Guide for the Early Years is written for the teachers of children in the state's preschool and kindergarten programs. The *Guide* provides information to help teachers establish and maintain high quality programs for the children in their classrooms. Though the primary audience is early childhood teachers, the *Guide* speaks to principals and local administrators who supervise early childhood programs as well as educators who provide inservice and teacher preparation programs. We further invite all who share our interest in early childhood education to use this document

A task force of fifty early childhood educators from throughout the state of North Carolina came together to review curriculum guides, the needs of children and their communities, and related research findings. From these discussions, they developed position papers. Smaller groups subsequently reviewed the papers for alignment with policies of the State Board of Education and synthesized the initial work into this *Guide*.

State Board of Education policies that emphasize program accountability, program implementation to support knowledge the basics (reading, writing, and math), and local decision making are reflected throughout *The North Carolina Guide for the Early Years*. Moreover, the National Goals Panel reports, professional organizations' program standards, and the wisdom and experience of the task force members have provided support for the construction of this framework.

In the spirit of local control and with a focus on the basics, the *Guide*:

- frames the broad issues regarding curriculum and instruction for early childhood programs
- identifies and describes the major curricular and instructional approaches used in North Carolina and across the nation
- provides a framework for local program planners as they develop programs for young children

Effective education for young children can evolve in many ways. No one resource can provide all the answers. Early childhood professionals can use this guide as a foundation for educational practices—adding their own particular skills, resources, and creativity to the classroom. Educators must also study current trends and issues, work with and learn from other professionals, and evaluate programs to ensure that young children have the very best opportunities possible. This comprehensive, collaborative environment fosters optimal learning for all children.

Acknowledgements

The North Carolina Guide for the Early Years is based on knowledge of research, theories, and professional practices. We thank the many generous people who gave so unselfishly of their expertise, time, and resources to provide the direction and content of this *Guide*.

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Chapter 1

How Do I Get to Know the Children in My Class?

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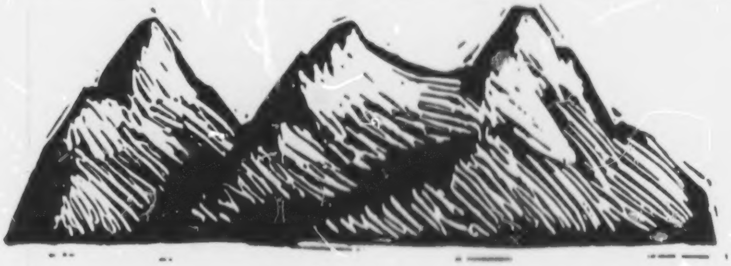
1. How Do I Get to Know the Children in My Class?

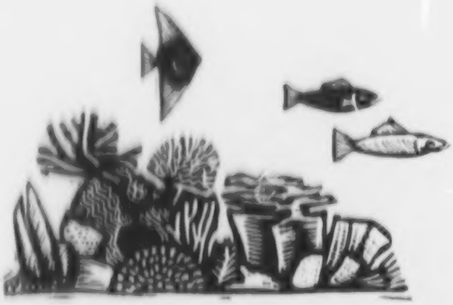


EACH SCHOOL DAY, nearly 500,000 children ages three through seven walk into classrooms across North Carolina. Bustling with energy, talking and laughing, these children reflect the rich diversity of our state. From the mountainous western region to the flat coastal plains, school children bring with them a variety of experiences, interests, and needs. Our task, as early childhood professionals, is to make the most of each day they are in our care. To be successful, we need to know the children as unique individuals. We must create meaningful opportunities that help them learn, grow, and develop.

Creating meaningful and stimulating experiences for groups of young children is not easy. It involves determining what each child is ready to learn and experience. It requires introducing topics that interest children, and using activities and teaching methods that motivate them. To do this, we depend on information that comes from many sources—

- child development and learning
- each child's family and community
- the individual child

This chapter addresses ways to best gather this knowledge.



Child Development and Learning

How Children Grow and Develop

The human brain grows rapidly during childhood. Because the young child's day-to-day experiences affect neural growth and brain development, it is crucial that early childhood professionals make the most of this time with young children.

Since the 1970s, and especially in the last decade, scientists have used DNA research and imaging techniques to study how the brain develops. This research underscores the importance of experiences in the early years of life. (Begley, 1996; Dana Alliance for Brain Initiatives, May 15, 1995 and September 12, 1995; and Education Commission of the States, October 1996 and November 1996.)

Making Connections

Carla Shatz, President of the Society for Neuroscience and Professor of Neurobiology at the University of California at Berkeley, outlines implications of these emerging studies:

Babies' brains are not just miniature adult brains. Astonishingly, even after birth, the brain continues to change and reorganize itself...The brain's growth is not simply a matter of quadrupled size from birth to maturity, but a dynamic evolution in which experience finally influences complex and very precise wiring. Normally, during development nerve cells multiply in excess and migrate. A cell gradually extends, its growth directed, to contact other cells. Contacts formed in over-abundance (especially shortly after birth) are reduced in number at later stages, depending on whether or not experience calls on the exercise of initial connections. Some contacts initially formed disappear during this 'pruning' process, while use strengthens and further defines remaining connections as a part of maturing and learning...(Dana Alliance for Brain Initiatives, 1995a).

Connections within the brain develop rapidly in the first three years of life and continue to be established at a fast pace until children reach age eight to ten. The emerging research suggests these periods may be a combination of predetermined programming in the cells and experiences or environmental factors. Optimum times for learning, referred to as "windows" or "critical periods," may be related to the times when neurons mature and form connections to other parts of the brain.

This research is congruent with early childhood educators' beliefs that the early years are important for establishing learning patterns. Neurologists are just beginning to understand what experiences influence neural development. They do know that by adulthood, the brain is crisscrossed with over 100 billion neurons (Begley, 1996).

As their brains develop, children begin to show new understandings and skills in cognitive, social, and emotional areas. At the same time, they grow physically. Gross and fine motor development involve challenges and risks for young learners. Several theorists have described the development of children—their personalities, temperaments, thought processes, and skills—in a variety of domains. The works of Piaget, Vygotsky, Erikson, and Kohlberg, along with emerging research on brain development, guide early childhood education.

Jean Piaget

Jean Piaget (1952) believed that people develop intellectual capacity as they master events in their environments. He further believed that, although each individual comes to his or her own unique understanding of the world, human development follows a universal progression through distinct stages and trends. In Piaget's theory, young children think in ego-centric (self-centered), concrete ways based directly on what they experience through their senses and physical movements. The term sensori-motor perception comes from Piaget. He believed that experience and development are related. As they mature, individuals develop socio-centric rather than ego-centric, abstract rather than concrete, internalized rather than experience-based thought processes. According to his theory, children will not learn concepts until both cognitive development and experiences make them ready to learn. Exposing children to concepts or problems too advanced for their experiences will not promote cognitive development. Readiness is established through a combination of biological maturation and prior learning. Children and adults are internally motivated to learn and actively direct their own learning experiences rather than simply reacting to external cues and stimulation.

Cognitive, social, emotional, language, physical development, and development of responsibility follow predictable patterns; however, progress in one area can affect patterns of growth in other areas. As a result, individual children may develop at different rates in each domain. The following section describes typical patterns of growth and development.

Cognitive Development

Life experiences, maturing neural systems, and expanding brain capacity enable children to think in increasingly complex ways as they move from infancy through early childhood. The emerging research on brain development suggests there are optimum times for developing neural connections that support intellectual development. Children advance from relying on concrete experiences and literal meanings as they learn to use abstract and symbolic cues to process information and learn about their world. As they mature, they master elaborate strategies for organizing and processing information. Also, children develop conceptual frameworks as they expand their abilities to categorize and think conceptually. Children learn to solve problems in purposeful ways, using varied strategies and resources rather than relying on trial and error. As they interact with people and objects in the environment, children develop concepts

Lev Vygotsky

Lev Vygotsky (1978) identified the zone of proximal development as an important factor in learning. According to his theory, learning takes place when children are challenged by problems or knowledge just beyond their current ability. They acquire knowledge and skills as they link new experiences with what they already know and can do. In a learning situation, children first need teacher or peer support as they learn to function independently at higher levels.

Vygotsky's observations of children led him to propose that language development is an important component of thought and cognitive development. He believed that human intelligence develops as individuals interact in socio-cultural situations. Vygotsky observed children talking to themselves as they solved problems. According to his theory, children develop language and cognitive ability as they interact in problem-solving situations.

about the physical and social characteristics of their world. Not only do they begin seeing relationships among people and objects, but they also initiate them.

Erik Erikson

Erik Erikson (1963) studied psycho-social development. He believed that healthy personalities emerge as people master their social environment and perceive themselves and others realistically. Erikson coined the term *identity crisis*. He believed that as personalities develop people must resolve eight developmental crises and that the content and sequence of these stages is fixed. When a child or adolescent does not resolve a particular crisis in a healthy manner, he or she cannot advance through that stage and may develop psychological ill-health.

Social-Emotional Development

Infants and very young children perceive and interpret their experiences from a self-centered perspective. As they mature, children become more aware of others. Children's social-emotional development progresses from bonding with a significant adult to establishing friendships and relationships with other persons. As their social and emotional processes develop, children learn that they can modify their own behavior to take into account others' feelings, needs, and points of view. As children mature, they learn how to relate to and influence other people.

Language Development

This active, social process begins when infants hear sounds and make random, indiscriminate noises. Children learn to use noises, and then words and gestures, for intentional meaningful communication. They acquire language skills as they listen to and interact with others. Language development occurs along several dimensions that move from simple to complex—making purposeful sounds or words, attaching meanings to them, and combining words into phrases and sentences. According to one study, twenty-month-old infants whose mothers spoke to them frequently knew 131 more words than babies whose mothers spoke to them less often; by twenty-four months the difference increased to 295 words. Length or sophistication of the mothers' words and sentences did not seem to make a difference (Begley, 1996). As they develop, children learn to communicate in different social contexts and become interested in written and symbolic language. In the early years, children use language in very general ways. For example, a young child may call all animals dogs and all vehicles cars. Children first use language in concrete or literal ways and then learn to express and understand abstract ideas. As their language ability develops, children use more precise language and more intricate language patterns.

Physical Development

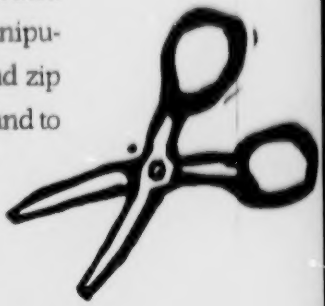
As children mature, their muscles, bones, neurological systems, digestive tracts, and endocrine systems develop. Children's loco-motor and manipulative skills move through stages from crawling and walking, to reaching and grasping, and running, and jumping. Children's motor abilities are refined through physical growth and opportunities to practice. With maturity, opportunity, and repeated practice, children learn to move easily and efficiently. As they develop, children become more coordinated, more able to control voluntary muscles, and more able to attend to and control their responses to stimulation. Gross and fine motor development influence children's ability to interact with their environments and to build skills to be successful learners.

Gross Motor Development

Gross motor development involves body awareness, understanding of spatial relationships, and control of large muscles. As children mature, they use large muscles to run, hop, climb, balance, push, pull, and pedal.

Fine Motor Development

Fine motor skills grow as children develop hand-eye coordination and the ability to use small hand and finger muscles to hold and manipulate objects. As children mature, they use fine muscles to button and zip clothing; to manipulate scissors, crayons, pencils, and paint brushes; and to build with blocks. With maturity, children tend to develop a right/left dominance or preference.



Responsibility Development

Children's social, emotional, and cognitive development are components of responsibility development. Through their relationships with people and the use of objects in their environment, children learn responsibilities. As they mature, children recognize that their behavior influences the people and things around them. They learn their behavior may cause pleasant or unpleasant consequences. At a very young age, children develop the ability to change their behavior and deliberately act in ways that result in predictable responses from peo-

Lawrence Kohlberg

Lawrence Kohlberg (1971) was interested in the reasoning people use as they make moral judgments. He believed that children, adolescents, and adults actively construct their concepts of morality as they encounter and resolve dilemmas. Kolberg proposed six age-related stages of moral development that begin with simple obedience and culminate with a sense of universal conscience.

ple and things around them. Initially, their understanding of cause and effect is concrete and literal. Their perspective is egocentric. Between the ages of five and seven, children begin to be able to see things from another person's point of view and sympathize with others' feelings. With this increasing understanding, children learn to value and respect the feelings and rights of others. They begin to develop a sense of identity with friends and community. Role models are an important part of this process. Children also learn to take care of things and put things back in place. They begin to develop a sense of responsibility.

How Children Learn

With rare exceptions, the developmental process unfolds in a similar fashion for children regardless of their gender, race, social or economic background or culture. Yet within this process, children grow and learn at their own paces and in their own unique ways. Rates of development within each domain vary for individual children. Individual children mature and progress at different rates. The challenge for educators and families is to use knowledge about child development and observations of individual children to create responsive learning environments, to set reasonable expectations for learning and behavior, and to identify signs of possible exceptional developmental patterns.

Another challenge for classroom teachers is to use what we know about child development and learning as a basis for creating safe, nurturing, productive learning environments and learning experiences.

Furthermore, teachers must

- stimulate development across all domains;
- provide integrated learning opportunities connecting content areas;
- prepare children for future academic learning expectations;
- use children's family and community experiences to provide learning opportunities that are meaningful and relevant to their lives.

Discovery learning, experience with concrete objects or manipulatives, and multi-sensory experiences enhance learning in young children by helping them understand the world and how things work. The work of Piaget and literature on constructivist learning indicate that learners must respond actively to experiences in order to learn. Although observing models and listening to instructions are preliminary steps, children learn by doing, not simply by listening or observing. To learn, children must plan their own actions and responses; they must practice and do things themselves.

Children are more likely to learn when activities are based on their interests. Curriculum provides guidelines for expected learning outcomes; teachers use children's interests and experiences to plan meaningful activities. By linking new activities and concepts to previous ones, teachers facilitate learning by helping children build on what they already know.

Advocates of constructivism believe that this linking of new concepts to what is already known is an important part of learning. Constructivists also believe children are motivated to learn when tasks are interesting; and, that children should have opportunities to apply the things they learn to real-life situations. Therefore, children must have opportunities to ask questions, to solve problems, to have good role models and to make decisions, as well as time to reflect about what they have done.

Children who have success develop a sense of what Bandura (1996) calls *self-efficacy*, beliefs about their ability to experience success completing academic tasks. When children see their peers being successful, they believe that they can accomplish similar things. Self-talk and messages from others, including teachers, family members, and peers, contribute to feelings of efficacy. Teachers can help children set reasonable goals that are specific, moderately challenging, and attainable in the not-too-distant future. Reaching goals stimulates effort, persistence, feelings of efficacy, and motivation.

The cycle of learning and teaching (Bredekamp & Rosegrant, 1992) defines four levels of learning for children and offers strategies to support learning at each level. In this model, children progress from awareness to exploring concepts. They then ask questions about a concept and, finally, are able to use what they have learned in new situations. The next page shows what children and teachers do at each step of the learning cycle.

Cycle of Learning & Teaching

	Children's Activities	Teachers' Activities
Awareness	Experience Acquire an interest Recognize broad parameters Attend, perceive	Create the environment Provide opportunities by introducing new objects, events, & people Invite interest by posing problems or questions Respond to children's interests or shared experiences Show interest, enthusiasm
Exploration	Observe Explore materials Collect information Discover Create Figure out components Construct own understanding Apply own rules Create personal meaning	Facilitate Support & enhance exploration Provide opportunities for active exploration Extend play Describe children's activities Ask open-ended questions: "What else could you do?" Respect children's thinking & rule systems Allow for constructive error
Inquiry	Experience Investigate Propose explanations Focus Compare own thinking with others Generalize Relate to prior learning Adjust to conventional rule systems	Help children refine understanding Guide children, focus attention Ask more focused questions: "What else works like this?" "What happens if..." Provide information when requested: "How do you spell...?" Help children make connections
Utilization	Use learning in many ways: learning becomes functional Represent learning in various ways Apply learning to new situations Formulate new hypotheses & repeat cycle	Create vehicles for application in real world Help children apply learning to new situations Provide meaningful situations to use learning

(Bredekamp & Rosegrant, 1992)

Each Child's Family and Community

One of the best places to learn more about the individual children in our classrooms is from their families. After all, they know their children best and have had the most influence on them. Trying to develop a relationship with a child without getting to know the family is like seeing only half the picture! Family members can best describe their children's interests and experiences, abilities and actions. This information helps us plan meaningful opportunities at school that stimulate and challenge.

Often the first experience young children have away from their families and homes is in the early childhood classroom. As teachers, you are concerned about making their transition to this group setting smooth. By working closely with families, you can help children feel comfortable and develop their confidence and skills in the new environment. By encouraging families to participate in their children's program, you

- show respect for the role of the family as the child's first and most significant teachers;
- increase a child's self-esteem by showing that you value his or her family;
- provide for continuity and coordination in the child's learning between home and school;
- create opportunities to share information with families about their child's growth and development;
- increase the likelihood that the program is relevant to the needs of families and community.

Factors Affecting Family Participation

It is not always easy to get to know families. There are only so many hours in a day, and both teachers and parents or caregivers lead busy lives. It may be hard to find a way to communicate with family members or to meet with them. Families are also all different—varying in values, cultural heritage, routines, interests, and economic status. The stereotypical family of a working father and homemaking mother rarely exists. Today's families may have two parents, a single parent, stepparents, foster parents, adoptive parents, or grandparents or other relatives as parents. The head of the household may be sixteen or sixty-five. As you plan to involve family members in the early childhood program, consider these parameters.

- Value and belief systems
- Language
- Customs and traditions
- Family structure and roles
- Family preferences about school involvement
- Work or school schedules
- Additional children or adults at home who need care
- Finances
- Availability of transportation
- Physical and mental health
- Parental maturity and understanding of the child's needs
- Past experiences with schools, teachers, and institutions of authority

Strategies for Building Partnerships

As a teacher, how can you encourage the active participation of parents or caregivers in your program? Consider these strategies.

Take time to get to know families

Building rapport and trust with families as the basis for mutual respect takes time. Strong foundations for lasting relationships cannot be rushed; they are built from a balance of becoming close to other people without prying into their lives.

Guiding Principles for Family/School Partnerships

- Value families as children's first teachers and as important sources of information.
- Recognize and respect various family structures.
- Encourage and value active family participation in decisions about children's education.
- Solicit family members in shaping school-wide policies.
- Include learning for all family members in children's education experience.

Respect, accept family diversity

Show concern for all the people in the child's home who are regarded as members of the family. Developing an understanding of the cultural, social and economic factors affecting the family will contribute to your understanding of the children and to our ability to help them learn.

Show sensitivity toward the emotional needs of the family, including their need for privacy

Develop your ability to listen carefully without interrupting or judging. Accept that a family's interest in and ability to participate in their child's program may change over time, depending on their circumstances. A family with a child with special needs, for example, may feel especially overwhelmed from time to time. A family's previous experiences and personal preferences may affect their willingness to share some types of information. Schools should only request information that is directly related to children's learning. Always respect the family's right to confidentiality.

Design flexible schedules

Consider family schedules when inviting participation in school events. Schedule conferences at times that accommodate a variety of family schedules and transportation arrangements, even though this may mean some late afternoon or evening work. Respond to family concerns in a timely manner, adjusting your schedule as needed.

Frame your concerns positively

Let families know in advance when you want to meet with them, and be prepared to emphasize solutions that meet their interests and needs. Recognize that any meeting about a child can be stressful for parents and be as positive as possible. Parents of children with special needs may want to bring someone else to the meeting. Extend this option to all parents.

Help families find resources in the community. Families may need help to identify and access community services for themselves and their children. No single program will meet all the needs of all families. This means that in addition to traditional roles, teachers and administrators are becoming knowledgeable links to resources. In some cases, schools can provide resources themselves to help families participate in their child's program. Sometimes simply arranging transportation to school meetings and providing child care at meetings can boost family participation.

Ideas for Communicating with Families

- Home visits
- Classroom visits
- Open houses
- Newsletters
- Other print materials
- Group meetings
- Individual conferences
- Samples of the child's work
- Bulletin boards
- Advisory committees
- Community outings
- Phone calls
- Daily diaries
- Cassette or VCR recordings
- Discussion groups
- Suggestion box
- Questionnaires
- Web site

Support families during transitions. Children receive care and education at many places in a community. For example, the child lives at home, plays in the neighborhood, attends a local preschool, receives health care at a clinic, and uses transportation services to and from church. Each day children routinely make transitions from one setting to another. Being aware of these transitions helps us better understand children and families and challenges us to think of ways to make the transitions smoother.

A major transition for children and families is enrollment in school. School readiness is not a simple matter of whether families are ready for school or schools are ready for families. Families and teachers must work with others in the community to make sure young children feel secure and comfortable during transitions from one placement to another. Arranging for the family to visit the new program and scheduling meetings between the child's previous and future teachers are important steps in this direction (Bailey, McWilliam, Winton & Simeonsson, 1993; Dunst, Trivette & Deal, 1988).

Gathering Information from Families

Early in a child's enrollment, consult families about their hopes for their children and their ideas for the program. Consider these questions.

- What are your hopes and expectations for your child in school?
- What are your child's special interests and talents?
- How would you like to see us help your child?
- What do you enjoy doing with your child?
- How do you expect your child to react to school? How is your child adjusting to school?
- What questions and concerns do you have about the program?
- What would you want from your child's teacher?
- What kinds of information and support would you like from the school? (Ways to meet other parents, information about the school curriculum, information about community services and resources?)
- How would you like to help in the school or in your child's group?
- How can school be a greater part of your community?

The Community Impact

How does the family participate in the community at large? What community factors influence the child's growth and development? To develop an understanding of the family's unique priorities, concerns, and resources, consider the child in the context of his or her community.

Just as families differ, so do communities. Some are formed when people who share common interests in children, work, or leisure live near each other. Others form when immigrants from the same country live and work closely together. Communities may be rural, urban, or suburban. Some are agricultural, while others are industrial. In many communities, homes are miles apart; in others, apartment buildings or housing developments house hundreds of families living side by side. Individual communities may look very different from one another and reflect different traditions, events, and cultures.

As a teacher, you can make your classroom relevant to many communities by inviting families to be a part of your program. The art work, toys and materials, activities, and interactions in the classroom can show that all cultures are valued and important in the day-to-day experiences at school. By helping the children learn about community events and relationships, and by showing them the connections between school, home, and community, you can have a lasting, positive effect on a child's life.

Encouraging Family Participation

Because all families are different, family members will participate in their child's program in different ways. Get to know families and use their experiences and perspectives to help you improve their child's program. For those who may have younger children in the home, a language barrier, or personal health issues, simply maintaining the child's enrollment in your class is involvement. For others, advocacy and leadership roles are unlimited. For all of them, your commitment to keeping the channels of communication open is critical to the success of partnerships between parents and teachers and to children's bright outlook toward learning.

Shaping Programs through Parent Feedback

- Find out what parents think about ways to improve your program.
- Develop a questionnaire asking parents to rate program quality.
- Capture parent ideas about improving classroom activities via a suggestion box, informal conversation, or an evaluation form.
- Establish a monthly discussion group in which parents make suggestions for making program policies and practices more family-friendly.

Ideas for Family Participation

At Home

- Telephone other parents about upcoming events.
- Cut out and color simple materials for the program.
- Wash sheets and towels.
- Send program snacks.
- Read to their child.
- Do learning games with their child.
- Help write, edit, illustrate, or circulate program newsletters.
- Send in recyclable materials.
- Repair equipment or materials.
- Share information, via phone or notebook, with the teacher about their child.
- Donate used clothing for the dramatic play area.
- Make props for center time.
- Display children's work.
- Assemble a scrapbook about their child to share with teachers.

In the Community

- Locate door prizes for parent meetings.
- Serve as an interpreter for families who are not fluent in English.
- Participate in fund-raising activities for the school.
- Take classes that enhance knowledge and skills.
- Join in health and consumer information forums about children.
- Take their child to the library, museum, park, or community center.
- Join local, state, and national parent and early childhood organizations.
- Educate employers about the need for family-friendly work policies such as flex time.
- Help organize a special event, field trip, or visit by a community member to the program.
- Develop an "Adopt-A-Family" or "Welcome Wagon" program for new families.

All lists taken from (Hardin, Lohr & Wesley, 1997)

I. How Do I Get to Know the Children in My Class?

In the Classroom

- Write a story as a child tells it.
- Read to a child.
- Share a special interest, ability, or experience.
- Help a child to accomplish a special goal.
- Serve as a substitute or volunteer.
- Help with lunch, nap time, or a special event.
- Share information about cultural traditions through storytelling or demonstration.
- Bring a favorite food to share.
- Lead a small group of children in an activity.
- Supervise a special activity center.
- Assist in efforts to evaluate global classroom quality.

At the Center or School

- Attend individual conferences.
- Attend a family meeting, family night, or potluck supper.
- Act as greeter at a parent meeting.
- Organize a family support group.
- Establish a buddy system, cluster group, or family car pool for attending meetings.
- Lead activities for children during parent meetings.
- Become a member of an advisory or policy board.
- Build or repair furniture or equipment.
- Assist with updating a list of toys available through the program's lending library, or staff the library one afternoon.
- Answer the telephone to provide a secretary a break.
- Conduct training sessions for staff or parents.
- Participate in evaluating the effectiveness of the overall program.

On the Playground

- Help children play games or teach them a new one.
- Conduct a safety check of equipment and grounds.
- Share special knowledge about the outdoors.
- Conduct an outdoor experiment.
- Set up and supervise an outdoor art activity.
- Help a child with special needs participate in an activity or use equipment.

All lists taken from (Hardin, Lohr & Wesley, 1997)

Quality Indicators for Family Involvement

- Family members make decisions in forming individual education plans for their children.
- Families are always welcomed in a child's classroom and are encouraged to participate.
- Families are given many opportunities to participate and exchange information with staff.
- Family members serve as representatives on committees and advisory boards that have direct input in planning activities and policies in the classroom and school.
- Family activities are planned in conjunction with families.
- Partnership activities and special events are presented at times and locations convenient to families.
- Frequent, ongoing and varied types of communication inform families about children's progress, classroom activities, and school events.
- Teachers actively solicit family involvement and listen to concerns as well as compliments.
- Teachers share and solicit information, and they work together with families in the best interest of children.
- Staff development activities are planned based on needs assessments that ask for suggestions from families.
- The school has a common vision and a plan for family participation.
- Family members and other volunteers are in the school and in classrooms daily.
- Materials and games are provided for family members and children to use together at home.
- Family involvement and home/school partnerships are assessed regularly, and the results are used to improve effectiveness.
- Family members are linked to community resources for additional support services. (Hardin, Lohr & Wesley, 1997)

The Individual Child

Understanding principles of how children grow, develop, and learn provides a foundation for planning meaningful, stimulating classroom experiences. Positive, open relationships with families yield valuable information about characteristics and unique needs of children, including social-emotional and health needs.

Even before the school year begins, teachers receive information from families, from child care providers, from early interventionists, from screening procedures, and from developmental checklists. You use this information to begin learning about children's interests, attitudes, and dispositions—as well as their backgrounds and experiences. Teachers need time to gather all available records and carefully review them before the school year begins. Then, you can plan an appropriate program by combining what you know about the developmental needs of young children in general with the specific characteristics of the children in your classes each year.

Many school systems use screening and readiness tests to learn about the individual children entering preschool and kindergarten. Originally designed to identify children who might benefit from special education services, screening tests look at developmental milestones. Results of screening tests may lead to referrals for further assessment. Readiness tests are intended to do just what the name suggests—help teachers know what children are ready to learn. Screening and readiness tests provide information for planning appropriate programs for young children.

All children entering preschool and kindergarten must have health assessment reports. A copy of the Kindergarten Health Assessment Report appears in the Appendix. It provides important information about development, illnesses, and vaccinations. All children with special needs must have an individualized education plan developed prior to receiving special education and related services. Such information must always be used with professional safeguards for confidentiality and never be allowed to create self-fulfilling negative expectations of children.

Young children change from day to day as learning occurs, development progresses, and skills emerge; therefore, teachers need current information about all domains. Continual observation provides information to build on emerging abilities and understandings. Such observation is necessary to structure experiences that encourage development in all areas for all children.

Teachers must connect what children know and are able to do with learning expectations established at local, state, and national levels. Families, teachers, and the children themselves need to know how children are doing in terms of established expectations. The challenge is to document progress in ways that are fair, consistent, and purposeful. Common ways to record observations and collect documentation to assess learning are described in Chapter 4.

Individual children grow and change at different rates even though the developmental process follows predictable patterns. Just as children get their first teeth at different chronological times, other developmental changes vary from child to child. As you get to know children in your class as individuals, you consider the developmental process in planning activities for them and the class.

Energy and activity level
Because children combine high energy levels with the need to rest, plan for quiet as well as active times during the day. Give children choices of busy and quiet as well as gross and fine motor activities.

Rates of physical growth
Children typically gain three to five pounds a year and grow about three inches in height. Ensure that classroom furnishings and arrangements accommodate the range of physical sizes and characteristics.

Levels of coordination
Children are developing preferences for right or left handedness. Offer a variety of large and small muscle activities that allow them to develop lateral awareness and coordination.

Health and hygiene habits
Children form basic health care habits early in life. Plan activities to encourage good health and hygiene, including handwashing, dental care, balanced diet, and good eating habits.

Needs for sleep and rest

Children require approximately ten hours of sleep per night. Daytime nap needs vary from child to child. Adjust the length of nap time and other options for quiet activities during the rest period depending on the needs of children in the classroom.

Preferences for group and solitary activities

Some young children are interested in playing with peers while others may prefer solitary play. Structure your classroom so children can choose to interact with others or to be alone.

Levels of cooperation and sharing

Children between the ages of three and seven are just learning to respect others. Offer day-to-day classroom activities that give children varied opportunities to practice getting along with other children and adults.

Delayed Language Development

Children learn by talking about things and thinking about things. Language is an important part of learning. Early intervention programs can reduce learning problems associated with language delays. Language delays may result from one or a combination of factors.

- Children may have limited opportunities to use language at home or in the child care setting. Perhaps needs are met automatically with no need for language to get help or attention, to make choices, to defend himself or herself, or to find out new things.
- Children may speak another language as a primary language.
- Children may have recurring ear infections or other physical conditions that limit hearing.
- Children may be adjusting to new situations in their homes or in the child care setting. Children react to illness or absence of a family member, birth of a sibling, moving, change in day care providers, or change in day care setting. A temporary response to changes in life situations may be to stop talking.
- Children may have developmental disabilities that affect the way they process and use language (Wesley, 1992).

Children's developing self-concepts

Early perceptions and experiences can have powerful lifelong effects. Allow children to explore, and to experience success in a variety of activities. Feelings of trust and attachment must be developed to support positive self-concepts.

Interest in writing and drawing

Children express themselves and represent feelings, thoughts, experiences, and emotions through drawing, scribbling, and writing. Early markings and drawings move through stages that indicate levels of development. Provide opportunities for children to use markers, paints, crayons, and a variety of paper and instruments throughout the day.

Developing language

Children develop concepts as they talk and think about their experiences. An early childhood classroom is full of things to do, see, and talk about. Provide an environment full of experiences, and rich in language and print, to extend language concepts.

Developing understanding of mathematical concepts

Young children develop math concepts in different ways. They begin by understanding like and different, sorting, patterning, seriation, measurement, spatial relationships, and concept of number and time. Help children develop these concepts by providing an environment rich in manipulative materials.

Differing attention spans

Young children typically focus on one thing at a time. Activities hold some children's attention for long periods of time. Other children move from one thing to another very quickly. Provide many different situations to engage children in learning activities.

Indicators from the child

During the school year, children who are involved in classroom activities show us what they know and can do. They draw; they scribble and write; they build; they talk; they climb, run, jump and dance; they tell and retell stories. Children's work products and performance during activities provide authentic evidence of growth and development. Their behaviors and reactions give us clues to successes as well as larger problems. Teachers and others use careful, systematic observation and documentation to know how children perform in routine classroom situations. This information serves as the basis for assessing changes in learning and development. Potential indicators and possible causes are found on pages 1.32 and 1.33.

Summary

Young children are active, physical human beings looking for ways to express themselves. As they explore the world, they learn through concrete experiences. Children are motivated to learn by participating in activities that are relevant to their lives or interests. General principles of child development and learning, information from the child's family and community, and specific data about individual children combine to guide teachers' planning. These factors impact both typical and atypical classes. For the individual child, age appropriateness, individual appropriateness, and social and cultural appropriateness are complementary guides for planning learning activities.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children tells us:

> *Good practice results from professionals making decisions about the well-being and education of children based on at least three important kinds of information or knowledge:*
>
> ***What is known about child development and learning***—knowledge of age-related human characteristics that permits general predictions within an age range about what activities, materials, interactions, or experiences will be safe, healthy, interesting, achievable, and also challenging to children.
>
> ***What is known about the strengths, interests, and needs of each individual child in the group*** to be able to adapt for and be responsive to inevitable individual variation.
>
> ***Knowledge of the social and cultural contexts in which children live*** to ensure that learning experiences are meaningful, relevant, and respectful for the participating children and their families (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997, p. 9).

Indicators from the Child

What if a child

- bumps into furniture, walls, and people?
- squints, closes one eye, or tilts his head to try to see better?
- complains that her eyes hurt?
- rubs his red, watery eyes, or encrusted eyelids?
- holds objects very close to her eyes?
- does not seem to focus on people, things, or activities?

Visual problems may be present.

What if a child

- uses motions and gestures rather than talking?
- uses noticeably fewer words than peers?
- turns one ear, usually the same one, toward sounds or the voices?
- does not turn when her name is called?
- does not react to sudden noises?
- does not seem to understand speech?
- speaks in non-speech sounds or uses speech that cannot be understood?
- always talks in either a very loud or a very soft voice?
- frequently has ear discharges or earaches?

Hearing problems should be considered.

What if a child

- seems to withdraw from others?
- has problems making transitions?
- has problems making friends?
- does not interact with other children?
- is difficult to comfort?
- regularly interferes with other children's activities and play groups?
- finds it difficult to control his own behavior?
- has exaggerated response to sudden noises or surprises? is unusually quiet?
- has toileting problems (not related to physical condition or developmental stage)?
- displays repetitive or self-stimulatory behaviors?

Emotional development and social responsibility may be problems.

(Adapted from Wolfe, Griffing, Zeger, & Herring, 1982)

What if a child

- has difficulties balancing and walking?
- shows greater coordination on one side of the body than on the other?
- does not seem to keep pace with other children either in growth or in ability to walk?
- has poor muscle tone (either very stiff or flabby)?

Motor development may be delayed.

What if a child

- has problems understanding speech and following simple directions?
- has a much smaller vocabulary than her peers?
- speaks in non-speech sounds or uses speech that is not understandable?
- just does not communicate?

Language delays and difficulties are probable.

What if a child

- does not remember simple events, names, or routines?
- repeats words and questions, but usually in an unconnected manner?
- has little interest in caring for self and being independent?
- seems uninterested in surroundings and is withdrawn?
- is not easily consoled?
- cannot respond to problems peers handle with ease?
- does not understand concepts peers comprehend?

Cognitive difficulties should be considered.

What if a child

- is eager to tell the ending of a story before it is read?
- remembers and retells stories in great detail?
- has vocabulary more advanced than his peers?
- is easily bored with activities that engage other children in the group?
- recognizes written words or reads before peers do?
- recognizes complex patterns, including visual and number patterns?
- solves mathematical problems with ease?
- has a vast array of information about her world?

The child may be gifted

(Adapted from Wolfe, Griffing, Zeger, & Herring, 1982)

This brief introduction to children and their families provides a base for decision making as you plan instruction, but it is too general for the specific choices about what and how to teach. Our next chapter begins with widely held expectations for children and is designed to help teachers plan curriculum content and discipline knowledge.

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Chapter Highlights
How do I Get to Know the Children in My Class?

Child Development and Learning
- How children grow and develop
- Cognitive
- Social/Emotional
- Language
- Physical
  - Fine motor
  - Gross motor
- Responsibility
- How Children Learn

Each Child's Family and Community
- Factors Affecting Family Participation
- Strategies for Building Partnerships
- Impact of the Community
- Encouraging Family Participation

The Individual Child
- Predictable Patterns
- Language Delays
- Indicators from Children

Summary

References

What Do I Teach?

CAPTIVATION

Projects

Projects are in-depth investigations of topics worth learning more about. A project is a research effort deliberately focused on finding answers to questions about a topic posed either by the children, the teacher, or the teacher in concert with the children. The goal of this work is to learn more about the topic rather than to get the right answers. Projects provide children with opportunities to apply skills, to address their proficiencies, to stress intrinsic motivation, and to encourage them to determine what to work on while accepting them as experts about their own needs. Brainstorming is an essential part of the planning process for both teachers and children as they work with conceptual organizers.

Plan sheets

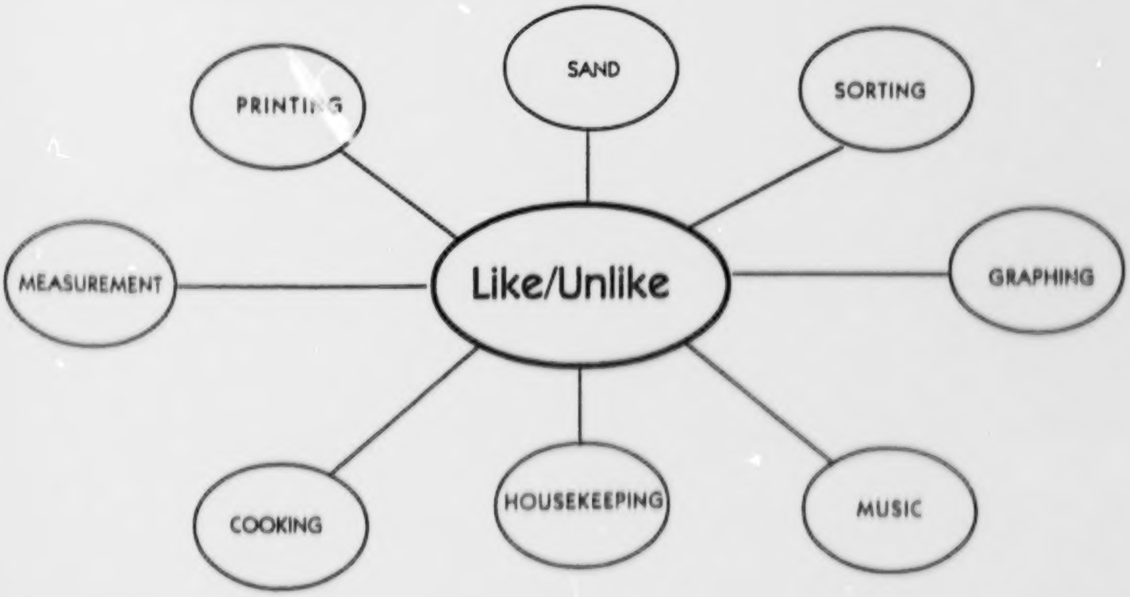
Plan sheets guide the design of units and/or integrated approaches to teaching and provide for gathering most information and materials prior to beginning the study.

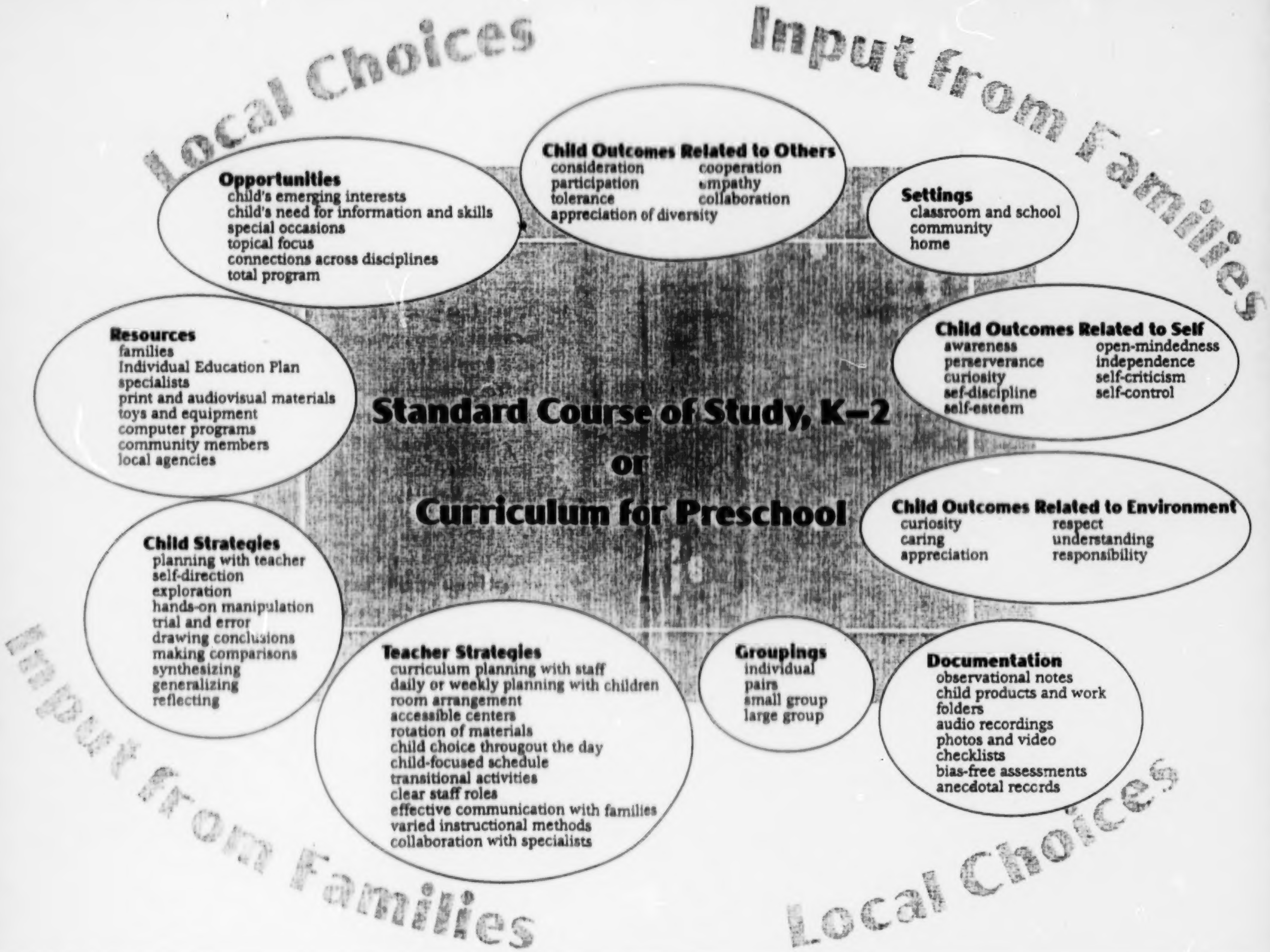
Graphic organizers

Often called webs, graphic organizers allow the development of diagrams to explore and determine relationships among concepts. The web on the following pages provides examples of all issues to consider when establishing a course of study for your class.

The *North Carolina Standard Course of Study* describes the skills and concepts we expect children to develop. The *North Carolina Guide for the Early Years* suggests options for teaching. However, the best program for young children is determined by information parents contribute and choices local school systems make. Many elements and components must be considered in planning and implementing these early childhood programs. The diagram below suggests necessary considerations. While no one learning experience can include all the elements in the planning process, the more that are included, the more integrated and rich the experience will be.

Begin with a concept such as "Like/Unlike." Consider as many of the components on the next page as possible to create rich, integrated experiences for the class.





Local Choices

Input from Families

Standard Course of Study, K–2

or

Curriculum for Preschool

Opportunities
- child's emerging interests
- child's need for information and skills
- special occasions
- topical focus
- connections across disciplines
- total program

Child Outcomes Related to Others
- consideration
- participation
- tolerance
- appreciation of diversity
- cooperation
- empathy
- collaboration

Settings
- classroom and school
- community
- home

Resources
- families
- Individual Education Plan
- specialists
- print and audiovisual materials
- toys and equipment
- computer programs
- community members
- local agencies

Child Outcomes Related to Self
- awareness
- perserverance
- curiosity
- sef-discipline
- self-esteem
- open-mindedness
- independence
- self-criticism
- self-control

Child Outcomes Related to Environment
- curiosity
- caring
- appreciation
- respect
- understanding
- responsibility

Child Strategies
- planning with teacher
- self-direction
- exploration
- hands-on manipulation
- trial and error
- drawing conclusions
- making comparisons
- synthesizing
- generalizing
- reflecting

Teacher Strategies
- curriculum planning with staff
- daily or weekly planning with children
- room arrangement
- accessible centers
- rotation of materials
- child choice througout the day
- child-focused schedule
- transitional activities
- clear staff roles
- effective communication with families
- varied instructional methods
- collaboration with specialists

Groupings
- individual
- pairs
- small group
- large group

Documentation
- observational notes
- child products and work folders
- audio recordings
- photos and video
- checklists
- bias-free assessments
- anecdotal records

Input from Families

Local Choices

As we saw in Chapter 1, a sound program for young children begins with knowledge of child growth and development, families, the community, and individual children. Understanding the widely held expectations—what a child may be able to do at various ages—across developmental domains and relating them to the curriculum and the disciplines helps establish productive learning experiences for young children. While this information gives us a good place to start, we need more information to develop strong curricula for young children. It is critical to consider curriculum guidelines, curriuclum models, the content disciplines, and conceptual organizers. Chapter 2 addresses these components.

Widely Held Expectations

Widely held expectations are generalizations made about children's growth and development that show common patterns over time. Parents and teachers use them as frames of reference to understand and predict children's behavior, their interests, and their responses to environmental influences and events. These expectations are based on observations and experiences with children, research, and reports of parents and teachers about children who demonstrate typical and atypical developmental patterns.

Descriptions of the four primary developmental domains—cognitive, social/emotional, language, and physical—as well as developing responsibility, are sketched in the pages which follow. They provide basic guides for orienting teachers to expected behavior of children.

Expectations are helpful guides, but they are only generalizations and cannot account adequately for individual differences and the uniqueness of each growing child. Individual children may demonstrate wide deviations in development over time. When planning curriculum, keep in mind where the children in your classes are in terms of these widely held expectations.

Widely Held Expectations in Cognitive Development

3–5 years	5–7 years
explores world through play and direct experiences	learns from direct experiences, and hands-on activities begins to link language with experiences
begins to understand cause and effect	begins to use words like "why," "when," and "how" correctly to indicate casual reasoning
develops a sense of the meaning of writing and reading	understands that print may tell a story, describe an event, and/or communicate information
asserts personal choice in decision making	begins to organize information in order to remember it
begins to develop an interest in numbers	can match counting 1,2,3 with the number of objects
plays at reading by "reading" picture and familiar storybooks; may appear to read by remembering chunks of favorite books	recognizes familiar words in print; begins to read; if reading, substitutes familiar words for unfamiliar ones
can think of tomorrow in relation to personal schedule and the near past with some degree of accuracy	communicates information about the near past with some degree of accuracy

Adapted from "Widely Held Expectations," *The primary program: Growing and learning in the heartland* (1994), Nebraska Department of Education.

Widely Held Expectations in Social/Emotional Development

3-5 years	5-7 years
displays emotions easily; shows frustration if language does not communicate needs/wants	shows intense emotions; begins to reflect on feelings if given space and distance from the event
plays alone or beside others	learning to cooperate with others
asserts independence; begins to develop fleeting friendships	develops more permanent friendships with peers based on shared interests
sees self as a family member and as boy or girl	makes common gender stereotypes
sees self as a "doer" and creative person, individual, someone who is creative	sees self as independent and productive; not oriented to peer comparisons
may appear to be selfish	looks for fair treatment by others
understands when an adult is upset with him; feels bad when an adult is upset	begins to see self as good or bad and will self-criticize
can take turns	begins to develop the ability to share and to participate in sustained turn-taking

Adapted from "Widely Held Expectations," *The primary program: Growing and learning in the heartland* (1994), Nebraska Department of Education.

Widely Held Expectations in Language Development*

3-5 years	5-7 years
loves to talk and call attention to self	speaks intelligibly most of the time; begins to be able to use language appropriately in different contexts
asks many questions and answers simple questions appropriately; needs practice in answering more elaborate questions	begins to be able to answer abstract questions (why, how, when) with increasing accuracy
can produce elaborate sentence structures	begins to understand that there are rules for language; understands that there are singular/plural contrasts for nouns
begins to use past tense of regular (but not irregular) verbs correctly	can use appropriate verb tenses, word order and sentence structure; can reflect on and correct verb tense use
enjoys simple songs and rhymes	enjoys telling jokes (especially plays on words) and riddles; plays with slang and profanity
enjoys being read to; pictures do not have to match words	enjoys being read to; likes books with chapters; can sustain interest in a story over several days
talks about known objects and the actions of others	defines simple words by function (a ball is to bounce)
vocabulary grows from around 300 words to over 1000	capable of learning more than one language in bi- or multi-lingual settings

Adapted from "Widely Held Expectations," *The primary program: Growing and learning in the heartland* (1994), Nebraska Department of Education.

* Additional stages and expectations are included in the Appendix.

Widely Held Expectations in Physical Development

3-5 years	5-7 years
experiences a period of rapid growth	experiences a lower and more individualized rate of development
continues to develop handedness and hand-eye coordination	increases fine motor skills; handedness and footedness begin to match
can climb, balance, run, gallop, jump, push, pull and go up and down stairs	continues to develop running, climbing, galloping, and jumping; some trouble with skipping
can physically concentrate on one activity at a time when interested	plays vigorously and tires easily with quick recovery after resting
begins to take part in group play but still plays side-by-side	can take part in small group games; begins to understand turn taking in games; has rudimentary understanding of rules
exhibits slower rate of small muscle development (hands) than of large muscles (legs)	develops an awareness of safety needs of self and others
is usually far-sighted	remains far sighted; vision problems may be identified as child relates to printed text

Adapted from "Widely Held Expectations," *The primary program: Growing and learning in the heartland* (1994), Nebraska Department of Education.

Widely Held Expectations in the Development of Responsibility

3-5 years	5-7 years
begins to be aware of others and their wants and feelings	shows increasing awareness of others' feelings; begins to see self through others' eyes
begins to see others' views but remains self-centered	responds to others in times of distress if encouraged to do so
can sense when another person is angry, sad and happy	can respond sympathetically to others if they are upset, hurt, or crying
begins to be aware of consequences of own behavior	understands consequences of own behavior and the behavior of others
shows aggressive feelings when something doesn't go his/her way	can settle a conflict or dispute when given the opportunity and support to negotiate with peers
interested in exploring the environment outside of the home	begins to notice how people are similar and different from one another
often looks to others, particularly adults, for signals about whether an activity is appropriate or enjoyable	may prefer to play alone or with others depending on the place or activity

Adapted from "Widely Held Expectations," *The primary program: Growing and learning in the heartland* (1994), Nebraska Department of Education.

Early Childhood Curriculum

Appropriate developmental expectations of children provide the foundation for early childhood curriculum. But what is curriculum, anyway? Ask educators to describe critical components of their curriculum, and you may hear about theories supporting their instructional decisions as well as descriptions of classroom activities.

> *Learning is built on relationships to prior knowledge and experiences. I work closely with parents to find out what kinds of things the children are involved in outside of school, and build on that in the classroom.*

> *Meaningful rewards and dependable consequences are at the root of my curriculum. Children have a predictable routine every day, and I build in systems for recognizing their accomplishments.*

> *A foundation in specific subject areas is important to me, but children need a combination of experiences to put it all together. My curriculum integrates activities across disciplines.*

> *Come into my classroom and you will see several major projects going on simultaneously. I believe children should have a chance to work on activities over a period of days or weeks if necessary. Many times our projects relate to themes of study the children have helped select.*

The early childhood curriculum is the planned management of time, materials, and activities to guide children's learning and development. It is an organized framework that delineates the content children are to learn, the processes through which they achieve the identified curricular goals, what teachers do to help children achieve these goals, and the context in which teaching and learning occur. (Bredekamp and Rosegrant, 1995, p.16) Ideally, the curriculum is shaped by communities and families as well as by children and teachers. While gaining content knowledge is a goal, curriculum includes everything that happens from the time the children walk into the classroom to the time they leave, including human interactions, teaching strategies, language and tone, and the physical arrangement of the room and the materials in it.

Interestingly, teachers who espouse different theories of development and learning often have classrooms that are remarkably similar, and yet some teachers who subscribe to similar beliefs have classrooms that are very different from each other! In *Right from the Start*, Bernard Spodek (1993) explains.

> *The genius of early childhood education in the United States has been its eclectic nature. Rather than rejecting new or foreign methods and theories, American educators and the American public have been willing to accept them, at least in some limited form. Seldom, however, has any form of early childhood education remained pure. As a result of the interaction of ideologies and the pragmatic approach of many educators, an American form of early childhood education emerged....* (p. 43)

The personalized approach described by Spodek evolves within individual schools and teachers. Choices about theoretical premises, administrative policies and pedagogical components determine the curriculum and define the educational outcome.

Guidelines for Appropriate Curriculum Content in Programs Serving Children Ages 3 through 8

The National Association for the Association of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (NAECS/SDE) jointly developed guidelines to help educators make informed decisions about curriculum content (NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 1991, p. 21-38).

Deciding What To Teach

In deciding what to teach young children, we often ask, "what do I teach, and how do I select the content?" Consider...

- is the content worth knowing?
- is it meaningful and relevant for these children's lives?
- can it be made more relevant by relating it to experiences that children have had, or can they easily gain direct experience with it?
- is the content accurate and credible according to recognized standards of the relevant disciplines?
- are the expectations realistic and attainable at this time, or could the children more easily and efficiently acquire the knowledge or skills later on? (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997, p. 15)

1. The curriculum has an articulated description of its theoretical base that is consistent with prevailing professional opinion and research on how children learn.
2. Curriculum content is designed to achieve long-range goals for children in all domains–social, emotional, cognitive, and physical—and to prepare children to function as fully contributing members of a democratic society.
3. Curriculum addresses the development of knowledge and understanding, processes and skills, dispositions and attitudes.
4. Curriculum addresses a broad range of content that is relevant, engaging, and meaningful to children.
5. Curriculum goals are realistic and attainable for most children in the designated age range for which they were designed.
6. Curriculum content reflects and is generated by the needs and interests of individual children within the group. Curriculum incorporates a wide variety of learning experiences, materials and equipment, and instructional strategies, to accommodate a broad range of children's individual differences in prior experience, maturation rates, styles of learning, needs, and interests.
7. Curriculum respects and supports individual, cultural, and linguistic diversity. Curriculum supports and encourages positive relationships with children's families.
8. Curriculum builds upon what children already know and are able to do (activating prior knowledge) to consolidate their learning and to foster their acquisition of new concepts and skills.

9. Curriculum provides conceptual frameworks for children so that their mental constructions based on prior knowledge and experiences become more complex over time.
10. Curriculum allows for focus on a particular topic or content, while allowing for integration across traditional subject matter divisions, by planning around themes and/or learning experiences that provide opportunities for rich conceptual development.
11. Curriculum content has intellectual integrity; content meets the recognized standards of the relevant subject matter disciplines.
12. Curriculum content is worth knowing; curriculum respects children's intelligence and does not waste their time.
13. Curriculum engages children actively, not passively, in the learning process. Children have opportunities to make meaningful choices.
14. Curriculum values children's constructive errors and does not prematurely limit exploration and experimentation for the sake of ensuring "right" answers.
15. Curriculum emphasizes the development of children's thinking, reasoning, decision-making, and problem-solving abilities.
16. Curriculum emphasizes the value of social interaction to learning in all domains and provides opportunities to learn from peers.
17. Curriculum is supportive of children's physiological needs for activity, sensory stimulation, fresh air, rest, hygiene, and nourishment/elimination.

18. Curriculum protects children's psychological safety; that is, children feel happy, relaxed, and comfortable rather than disengaged, frightened, worried, or stressed.
19. Curriculum strengthens children's sense of competence and enjoyment of learning by providing experiences for children to succeed from their points of view.
20. Curriculum is flexible so that teachers can adapt it to individual children or groups.

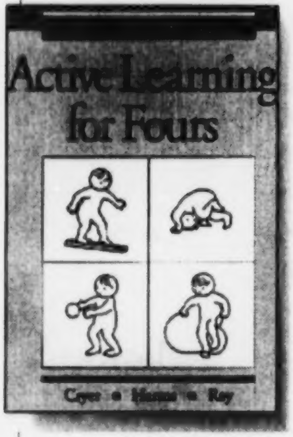
Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs (1997) suggests an additional consideration—when used, technology is physically and philosophically integrated in the classroom curriculum.

Curriculum Models

Early childhood educators have created many models to help teachers manage time, materials, and activities to guide learning and development. Some of the most widely recognized, used and accepted models are described below. Each has been explained by its developers, authors, and/or practitioners. Any perceived bias is that of the developer or author.

Active Learning

The Active Learning Series. (1996). Debbie Cryer, Thelma Harms, & Adele Ray. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.



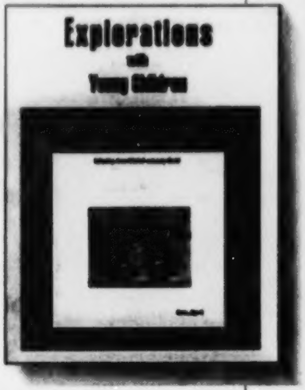
The Active Learning Series consists of seven volumes of age-appropriate activities that have been field tested in classrooms. There is a book for each year of life from infancy through kindergarten, and a book on using the series with children with disabilities. Each *Active Learning* book contains a complete planning guide as the first chapter, with suggestions for setting up a supportive physical environment, stimulating pro-social behavior and avoiding problems, sharing ideas with parents. The chapter also includes sample schedules, tips on productive group times, tips on writing an activity plan, and other general information needed to set up optimally functioning indoor and outdoor learning environments. Activities are divided into four sections.

- Activities for Listening and Talking
- Activities for Physical Development
- Creative Activities
- Activities for Learning from the World around Them

Each activity section includes several activity checklists designed to help teachers become effective self evaluators.

Bank Street

Explorations with Young Children: A Curriculum Guide from the Bank Street College of Education. (1992). Anne Mitchell, & Judy David (Eds.). Beltsville, MD: Gryphon House.



Whatever your setting, as an early childhood professional, you are a vital part of your children's early, critical years of learning and growth. The goal in writing *Explorations* is to offer a framework for planning and carrying out work with young children.

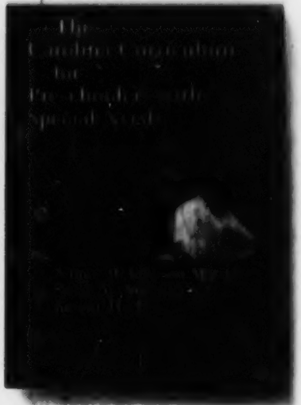
The *Guide* offers a way of thinking about—or helping others to think about—program issues and decisions on what and how to teach. The principles of the curriculum framework are developed extensively in the *Guide*, and include:

- Your work with children is based on knowledge of child development, and especially of the interdependence of social, emotional, physical, and intellectual growth.
- You learn about your particular children through observation and recording, through their works or products, through their families, and through others who have worked with them.
- You create a social/emotional environment that encourages a sense of community and of the value of each individual in the community.

The Bank Street approach is characterized by its emphasis on age-appropriateness and individual appropriateness in early childhood programs.

Carolina Curriculum

The Carolina Curriculum for Preschoolers with Special Needs. (1991). Nancy M. Johnson-Martin, Susan M. Attermeier, & Bonnie Hacker. Baltimore, MD: Paul H Brookes Publishing Co.



The Carolina Curriculum for Preschoolers with Special Needs is a criterion-based tool which can be used to assess and plan intervention regimes. It was designed to facilitate production of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). This curriculum is most appropriate for children with mild to moderate impairment in cognitive, language, and/or motor areas. It can be used for home-based programs, but includes specific strategies for inclusion in classroom settings with or without typically developing children. Introductory chapters describe test development, include a discussion of group settings, describe selected conditions and their effects in the classroom, and offer instructions for administration and implementation. *The Carolina Curriculum* includes the five domains described in Public Law 99-457: cognition, communication, social adaptation, fine motor, and gross motor.

Each domain consists of several sequences of behaviors, allowing multiple and alternative modes of tapping the child's abilities. Each sequence was designed to be as ordinal as possible. Items in each sequence describe the materials needed, the assessment procedure, a criterion for passing, and suggestions for teaching the item in a group setting.

Creative Curriculum

The Creative Curriculum for Early Childhood. (1993). Diane Trister Dodge, & Laura J. Colker. Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies, Inc.

Creative Curriculum

The Creative Curriculum for Early Childhood is an environmentally-based curriculum that shows teachers how to plan a program focusing on ten well organized and thoughtfully planned interest areas. Its underlying philosophy draws from Jean Piaget's work on cognitive development, Erik Erikson's stages of socio-emotional development, and accepted theories of how children learn best. The approach offered is practical, easy-to-understand, and immediately applicable to a variety of settings.

The Creative Curriculum provides a framework that enables teachers to make appropriate decisions about *what* children should learn and *how* they can learn it. Recognizing the high correlation between social competence and academic success, *The Creative Curriculum* shows teachers how to promote children's social skills through active learning within the context of a rich environment. It explains how to work with children at different developmental levels, how to adapt the environment to make it increasingly challenging, and how to involve parents in taking an active role in the program.

The first seven chapters address philosophy and theory, goals and objectives, the physical environment, meeting the needs of individual children, schedules and routines, organizing children's learning, and the parent's role. Ten interest areas are discussed which address the importance of the area to the children's development and learning, goals and objectives, how to set up and continually expand the area, ways teachers can interact with children to promote learning, and how to involve parents. The centers described are blocks, house corner, table toys, art, sand and water, library, music and movement, cooking, computers, and the outdoors.

Hawaii Early Learning Profile (HELP)
Hawaii Early Learning Profile. (1995). edited by VORT Publishers, Palo Alto, CA: Zeisloft Vort Corp.

HELP is a widely-used system of curriculum-based assessment and intervention products. The HELP skills are comprehensive—cognitive, language, gross motor, fine motor, social, and self-help. As a curriculum assessment, HELP is *not* standardized; it is used for determining the next steps and offers play-based activities and thirteen HELP tools covering ages birth through six years. These include parallel administration, assessment, curriculum, and family support materials for both ages birth to three and three to six.

Designed for use with young children who are delayed, have disabilities or atypical development, or who are at risk, the materials are developmentally sequenced so that each domain is organized into specific skills and sequenced in month-by-month increments. The focus is on the whole child and the importance of supportive environments and interaction, building on strengths and providing activities for working on specific needs. Age ranges are provided to indicate when a skill typically emerges.

High Scope

Educating Young Children. (1995). Mary Hohman, & David P. Weikart. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press.

Educating
Young Children

The High/Scope Curriculum was formulated in the 1960s and 1970s by the staff of the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation, under the leadership of David Weikart. Based on Piaget's constructivist theory of child development, the High/Scope Curriculum was originally developed for use with economically disadvantaged preschool children in the High/Scope Perry Preschool program. Since then, the curriculum has been disseminated nationally and internationally to a wide variety of populations in diverse settings. Its basic tenants have been adapted for use with facilities and children across the socioeconomic spectrum and for children ranging in age from infancy through adolescence.

The High/Scope Curriculum rests on the fundamental premise that children are active learners who learn best from activities that they plan, carry out, and reflect on. Early childhood classrooms are divided into interest areas. Sections of the classroom are separated by low dividers or shelves that define the various areas, provide storage space for materials, and allow children and adults to see all parts of the room. Areas and materials are labeled to help children develop ease of access to their environment.

An important part of the curriculum is the plan-do-review sequence of the daily routine, in which children make choices about what they do, carry out their own ides, and then reflect on their activities with adults and peers. In addition, children engage in small and large group activities, assist with cleanup, and have outdoor time. A series of *key experiences* describe how children perceive and act on their environment. Staff use the key experiences as a conceptual framework to help them plan activities, observe children, think about the day, and encourage the variety of experiences essential to young children's healthy physical, intellectual, social, and emotional growth.

The role of the teaching staff is to carefully observe children's activities and to provide a variety of materials and experiences for exploration. In this way, both staff and children play an active role and function as partners in the educational process.

Montessori

Information provided by Ceres S. York, Director North Carolina Center for Montessori Education, Raleigh, NC.

The Montessori approach to education is based on the premise that the individual child constructs himself through his experiences, in the atmosphere of the learning environment, and under the guidance and care of an observant, active, and responsive adult.

MONTESSORI
A Modern Approach
PAULA POLK LILLARD

The Montessori teacher has been prepared to observe children to find their abilities, to give positive lessons to individuals in small groups and in large groups, to design activities, to communicate in positive ways with children and adults, and to guide a classroom of students. There is an extensive practice teaching component in Montessori teacher education, so the Montessori teacher has had a year of guidance in his or her preparation.

The teacher gives lessons to fit children—either individually or in small groups. There are large group meeting times each day for announcements, sharing, and perhaps a lesson. The students learn appropriate behaviors in all these contexts. Another aspect of the teacher's role is record keeping; this is necessary for accountability. It is through the teacher's observation of the students absorbed in an activity that the teacher gains the information of how to help each child be successful in his or her learning and social interactions.

The prepared environment in the classroom consists of spaces designed to welcome both individual and group activities. Well maintained and logically arranged, the didactic materials are child manageable, and are arranged in area groupings of everyday living, sensory education, language arts, math and geometry, science, art, music, and cultural studies. To the basic set of purchasable wooden materials, the teacher adds activities and teacher assembled materials—especially in the areas of everyday living, language arts, science, and cultural studies. Open spaces as well as tables and chairs are available near each area for the students to work, using the materials and activities found there. There are many correct uses of the activities.

Teachers intercede only to give lessons or suggest refinements or, in the case of misuse, help the student return the activity to its place on the shelf, ready for later use. Teachers know that learning occurs with the individual's active use of the manipulatives. Consequently, non-destructive experimentation is welcomed. Both the prepared environment and the materials are self-correcting; they let the student know if he or she has been successful. This system encourages the independence and choice making that result in a positive image.

The Primary Program (Iowa/Nebraska)

The Primary Program, Growing and Learning in the Heart Land. (1993). a collaborative effort of the State Departments of Education in Iowa and Nebraska, Iowa Area Education Agencies, and Head Start-State Collaboration Project. Lincoln, NE: Nebraska Department of Education.

The Primary Program is built on five goals that are interrelated and of equal importance: (1) Development of responsibility, (2) Emotional and social development, (3) Intellectual development, (4) Physical development and well being, and (5) Aesthetic and artistic development.

The program honors the development of the whole child, reflects an understanding that children learn through active involvement and play, and recognizes that children represent their knowledge in a variety of ways.

The primary learning environment provides time and opportunities for children to experience and respond creatively to their world. Social in nature, it provides a secure and stimulating climate for all children, as well as time and opportunities for children to take appropriate risks and to explore and investigate their world. Children have experiences which encourage them to interact with others, to develop interpersonal skill, and to work and learn cooperatively and collaboratively.

Assessment and evaluation are viewed as integral components of the teaching-learning process to assist the teacher in making appropriate educational decisions. Each child's growth in learning is based on the five goals of the program—not against other children.

The program values teachers and parents as partners in the child's education. Teachers and parents consult and collaborate to create a climate of respect, success, and joy.

Reggio Emilia

Information from ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education Digest)

In the schools of Reggio Emilia, Italy, teachers determine their professional goals and teacher autonomy is evident in the absence of manuals, curriculum guides, or achievement tests. Teachers routinely divide responsibilities in the class so that one can observe systematically, take notes, and record children's conversations. These observations are shared with other teachers, the *atelierista* (a teacher trained in visual arts who works with classroom teachers in curriculum development and documentation), and parents in curriculum planning and evaluation. A head administrator, who reports directly to the town council, works with a group of *pedagogista* (curriculum team leaders), each of whom coordinates the efforts of teachers from four centers. Each center is

staffed with two teachers per classroom (twelve children in infant classes, eighteen in toddler classes, and twenty-four in preprimary classes), one *atelierista*, and several auxiliary staff. There is no principal, nor is there a hierarchical relationship among the teachers. This staffing plan, coupled with the policy of keeping the same group of children and teachers together for a period of three years, facilitates the sense of community that characterizes relationships among adults and children.

New spaces and remodeled old ones include the integration of each classroom with the rest of the school, and the school with the surrounding community. Classrooms open to a piazza (or central gathering area), kitchens are open to view, and access to the surrounding community is assured through wall-size windows, courtyards, and doors to the outside in each classroom. Entries capture the attention of both children and adults through the use of mirrors (on the wall, floors, and ceilings), photographs, and children's work accompanied by transcriptions of their discussions. These same features characterize classroom interiors, where displays of project work are interspersed with arrays of found objects and classroom materials. In each case, the environment informs and engages the viewer. Other supportive elements of the environment include ample space for supplies, frequently rearranged to draw attention to their aesthetic features. In each classroom there are studio spaces in the form of a large, centrally located atelier (workshop) and a smaller mini-atelier, and clearly designated spaces for large- and small-group activities. Throughout the school, there is an effort to create opportunities for children to interact. Thus the single dress-up area is in the center piazza; classrooms are connected with phones, passageways or window; and lunchrooms are designed to encourage playful encounters.

Teachers often work on projects with small groups of children, while the rest engage in a wide variety of self-selected activities typical of preschool classrooms. Projects are different from American ones. The topic of investigation may derive directly from teacher observations of children's spontaneous play and exploration. Reggio teachers place a high value on their ability to improvise and respond to children's predisposition to enjoy the unexpected. Regardless of their origins, successful projects are those that generate a sufficient amount of interest and uncertainty to provoke children's creative thinking and problem solving and are open to different avenues of exploration.

As children proceed in an investigation, generating and testing their hypotheses, they are encouraged to depict their understanding through one of the many symbolic languages: drawing, sculpture, dramatic play, and writing. They work together towards resolution of problems that arise. Teachers facilitate and then observe debates regarding the extent to which a child's drawing or other form of representation lives up to the expected intent. Revision of drawings (and ideas) is encouraged, and teachers allow children to repeat activities and modify each other's work in the collective aim of better understanding the topic. Teachers foster children's involvement in the processes of exploration and evaluation, acknowledging the importance of their evolving products as vehicles for exchange.

Community support is evidenced by a high level of financial support for the schools. Moreover, parents are expected to take part in discussions about school policy, child development concerns, and curriculum planning and evaluation.

Disciplines

Teachers must have a thorough understanding of content to plan for children's learning. The *North Carolina Standard Course of Study* outlines the program of work for students in grades K–12 in the public schools of the state. The following content areas are addressed in the Disciplines section of the *Guide*.

- English/language arts
- mathematics
- arts
- healthful living
- science
- social studies.

Foundations, implications, environments, materials, and national standards for learning/teaching each of the disciplines are addressed. Concepts, skills, and knowledge children in grades K-2 are expected to acquire are addressed. For English/language arts and mathematics, benchmarks are included.

Conceptual Organizers

By organizing the content around a key focal point, you can design activities that build on each other and integrate the children's experience. There are many types of conceptual organizers, but for young children all should be concrete, real, and relevant to their lives. Themes, units, and projects are the most frequently used approaches in programs for young children. While these terms are often used interchangeably, there are some important distinctions. Units and themes are implemented as independent activities, but are also related to project work. Involve children in planning and selecting topics and questions for all of these.

Themes

Themes are generally broad topics or concepts like seasons, animals, or change. Teachers gather materials that relate to the theme and organize them in centers and/or activities to achieve goals.

Units

Units are organizational strategies for relating many types of activities to one topic or concept. Activities, lessons and learning experiences are planned to enable children to explore the topic. With many varied experiences, children gain greater understanding of the topic or concept.

Summary

Widely held expectations, curriculum guidelines, curriculum models, the content disciplines, and conceptual organizers guide teachers in preschool and kindergarten classes to determine what to teach. The Discipline section helps teachers design integrated learning activities and provide balanced programs when establishing learning environments and planning activities. The suggested materials and learning activities in the Appendix are starting points, to which teachers can add their own knowledge and ideas. As you set up the classroom, read Chapter 3 for critical dimensions about how to teach.

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2. What Do I Teach?

Chapter Highlights

What Do I Teach?

Widely Held Expectations
Early Childhood Curriculum
  Guidelines for Appropriate Curriculum content and Assessment in Programs Serving Children Ages 3 through 8
Curriculum Models
  Active Learning
  Bank Street
  Carolina Curriculum
  Creative Curriculum
  Hawaii Early Learning Profile
  High Scope
  Montessori
  The Primary Program (Iowa/Nebraska)
  Reggio Emilia
Disciplines
Conceptual Organizers
Summary
Refernces

Chapter 3

How Do I Teach?

THE EARLY CHILDHOOD CURRICULUM provides direction for not only *what* to teach, but *how* to teach. Consider these critical dimensions while you set up your classroom.

- the physical environment
- the schedule
- the interpersonal setting
- the stages of children's development

The Environment

Establishing a home-like atmosphere in the classroom and making the facilities serve the curriculum and instructional needs of the children are challenging! Learning centers allow choices of materials and activities by providing stability and order to the classroom while encouraging children to explore and experiment. They provide interrelated, hands-on experiences to meet children's developmental needs and interests. Multicultural materials reflect heritages and communities. Well-planned centers foster physical and social skills as well as language and cognitive processes.

Centers for the Early Childhood Classroom

Learning centers provide many ways for children to develop skills and concepts in learning. At preschool and kindergarten levels, centers provide for rigorous exploration and experimentation with many materials and ideas, along with opportunities for children of varying abilities and needs to expand their understanding and knowledge.

Young children's work is play. Center activities and experiences develop language (reading and writing) skills and mathematics concepts as well as knowledge in other discipline areas.

Locate classroom learning centers based on needs for storage and water, the size of the group using the center, and the space needed for the materials. For example, the block center requires about 25% to 35% of the total classroom floor space. Because this center incorporates so many learning concepts, it should be established first. Consider floor coverings as you place centers. Water, sand, cooking, and art work best on materials that can be easily cleaned. Since space limits some classrooms from maintaining all centers at the same time, you may have to rotate them. Descriptions of learning experiences and suggested materials for centers appear in the Appendix.

Centers

- Art
- Blocks
- Books & Listening
- Cooking
- Computers
- Dramatic Play
- Manipulatives
- Music & Movement
- Sand & Water
- Science & Discovery
- Stitchery & Weaving
- Topical Areas
- Woodworking
- Writing & Printing

Analyze the physical space before arranging a classroom environment. Many classrooms are located in spaces designed for other purposes—storage areas, basements, trailers, or resource rooms. Teachers face the challenge of making space usable for children, and in doing so, must value and respect children's perspectives. Viewing the space from

From a Child's Perspective

- Is this a comfortable place to be? Do I want to stay?
- Are there adults here? What do they do?
- How many choices do I get to make here?
- Are these same kids going to be here tomorrow?
- Is there a space for me to put something of my own?
- Do I know where to find and return toys and materials? How do I know?
- Are there enough fun toys and materials? Can I do more than one thing with them? Do I even have to use them?
- Where will I eat? Where will I take my nap?
- Where can I run, climb, jump, and be noisy?
- Can I move about in this space if I use a walker, wheelchair, or other assistive equipment?
- Is there a quiet area where I can flop down and relax?
- If I want to play alone, is that okay? Where can I go to be alone?
- Do I know what parts of the center and classroom I can explore and what parts are off-limits?
- Is the same thing going to happen every day? How will I know what to do next?
- Can I get my special needs (medicine/therapy/special help during toileting) met? (Wesley, 1992).

knee level helps an adult glimpse the environment from a child's point of view. A child's stature determines what he or she can access and notice. For example, for crawling infants and some children with assistive devices, their primary space may be the floor. Preschool and school-aged children use more space than toddlers. Sample floor plans are in the Appendix.

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction suggests guidelines for both indoor and outdoor facilities. See *Preschool Program Guidlines for 3 and 4 Year Olds* (NCDPI, Draft) in the Appendix.

Arranging the Environment to Children

Arrange and stock the environment so that learning and discovery occur naturally during play. The following pages present information you can use to promote appropriate behavior, positive self concept, social interaction, self regulation, independence, and effective supervision in your classroom and program.

Promoting Appropriate Behavior

- Divide the room into attractive learning centers so that too much open space does not invite running.
- Determine that children can tell where learning centers start and end. Define boundaries for different types of activities clearly—art activities on the linoleum, soft pillow and dim lighting for quiet time.
- Provide materials for everyone, including duplicates of favorite toys.
- Organize similar things logically.
- Make sure there is enough space around the table for all children involved.
- Encourage creativity in the block center, not simply building and knocking down structures, by including accessories—bridges, chimneys, ramps, different types of blocks, people, animals, vehicles.
- Have a space in the room where children can go to be alone.
- Make sure each child has a cubby or space to store his or her personal belongings.
- Establish simple, common-sense rules and remind the children occasionally of what they are. (Wesley, 1992).

Promoting Positive Self-Concept

- Welcome families and children by providing a comfortable greeting and gathering area. Include photographs of families in the classroom.
- Provide ramps, elevators, wide aisles, handrails or other architectural modifications to support mobility for everyone.
- Promote exploration and discovery within the environment. Once mobility is assured, arrange materials in learning centers that invite children's independent use. Incorporate numerous and varied opportunities throughout the day for children to handle materials.
- Foster participation and success for everyone. Find opportunities for children to demonstrate competence. Provide a variety of materials, toys, and equipment that children with varying abilities can enjoy and master. Offer concrete, open-ended materials that relate to life experiences.
- Provide ample opportunities for successful personal interactions. Are play areas large enough for more than one or two children to play? Do materials and space invite pairing of children and cooperative play?
- Model positive reinforcement based on individual rather than group standards of achievement. Encourage peers to identify, promote and celebrate each other's strengths.
- Allow ample time and space for completion of projects.
- Encourage children to display their own work at eye level. (Wesley, 1992).

Promoting Social Interaction

- Schedule time for both small and large group as well as one-on-one activities
- Make sure the environment includes materials and activities that promote interaction: dolls, tea sets, dramatic play props, blocks and accessories, and group games.
- Structure interactive play by encouraging children to play games such as lotto matching or bingo and to work together on projects such as setting the table or cleaning up an interest area.
- Make play areas large enough for two or more children to play together.
- Suggest ways that children with disabilities can be included in play with their peers.
- Include a child who uses a wheelchair in pretend play in the housekeeping area by saying, "Perhaps Jason can pretend to go to the store to buy food for the dinner."
- Ask children directly to include someone by saying "Why don't you let Allison ride beside you in the car?"
- Give a child with special needs a favorite classroom toy and encourage others to ask permission to play together with the child and the toy.
- Comment on the strengths and unique abilities of all children as a way to help others want to interact with them. Let your curriculum include ample opportunities to celebrate individual differences. (Wesley, 1992).

Teachers Can Foster Self-Regulation

- Match behavioral expectations to children's developmental levels while remembering that every child is an individual and that some are further along than others in developing self-control.
- Know children as individuals.
- Evaluate and revise curriculum and environment to provide activities that engage children.
- Show children respect, even when disapproving their behavior. Say, "I don't like your behavior when you throw things," but never say (or imply), "I don't like you."
- Recognize messages conveyed by words, tone, and language.
- Use the physical environment to guide behavior—arrange classroom space to reduce risks of problem behavior.
- Give children manageable, specific, simple tasks. Say, "It's time to pick up the wood blocks," rather than "Please clean up the living room area."
- Redirect children into positive behaviors. If a child is pouring water from the sink onto the floor, say, "If you want to measure water, let's go over to the water table and you can practice," rather than "Don't spill."
- Help children recognize how their behavior makes other children feel. Say, "Gary appreciates your helping him pick up the blocks," or "Megan is angry because you won't let her play with you."
- Involve the entire class in problem solving. Say, "We have a problem. The book center is messy, and we can't find the books we want. What can we do?" (Wesley, 1992)

Self-Regulation (cont)

- Help children see the consequences of their actions. Say, "Books don't last long when they're torn. Let's get some tape and fix them."

- Remind children of rules in positive language. Say, "Before you go to the water table, remember that water sometimes spills. What do we do when water spills on the floor?"

- Use alternatives to time-out.

  - pounding play dough

  - one-on-one reading or singing with a favorite adult

  - doing a favorite quiet activity for a short period

The idea of time-out is that sitting apart can give children time to settle down. Children should not sit in time-out for long periods or for many times during the day.

- Acknowledge children's positive behaviors. Smile, nod, or make a brief comment of encouragement.

- Guide children in solving their own problems. Let them discuss alternatives when several children want a favorite toy, book, or rocking chair. Encourage them to select the way to take turns they think will work best.

- Encourage children to talk about their feelings and frustrations.

- Listen to children's words and watch their actions to understand what they are feeling. Acknowledge feelings and name them for children. Say, "I know you are feeling____because Joann____. Why don't you tell her so she will know how you feel?" (Mitchell & David, 1992, pp. 90-94)

Promoting Independence

- Arrange the classroom to encourage exploration and provide a clear view of what is available.
- Use pictures/words to label storage areas so that children know where to find and store materials. Help children with visual impairments identify locations by touch.
- Use pictures/words to define learning centers so that children can anticipate activities. Help children with visual impairments identify auditory cues.
- Arrange materials on open, low shelves so that children can help themselves.
- Use child-sized furnishings—sinks, toilets, tables, chairs, water fountains.
- Incorporate special equipment in a routine, functional way so that children with physical disabilities can do as much for themselves as possible.
- Follow a predictable schedule so that children learn to anticipate and prepare for the next activity.
- When children with hearing impairments are included, use sign language throughout the day, or develop and follow communication programs that work for them.
- Make sure each child has access to his or her own cubby to store and retrieve personal belongings.
- Support child choice and freedom of expression.
- Encourage some degree of risk taking for all children. (Wesley, 1992).

Promoting Effective Supervision

- Write clear job descriptions and define staff roles to include specific responsibilities for interacting with children.
- Make sure all areas of the room can be seen by an adult.
- Separate adult materials from child materials so that staff know where materials are stored and can retrieve them easily. Convenient storage allows staff to set up activities easily so they have more time to interact with children.
- Prepare activity plans for each day and organize materials ahead of time.
- Provide adult furniture in the room to encourage adults to interact with children. Place a comfortable adult-sized chair near the book or cozy area. Arrange meal and snack areas so adults can sit comfortably with the children.
- Follow children's lead and add to play ideas they initiate.
- Follow established adult/child ratios. (Wesley, 1992)

Dimensions of Environment

Elizabeth Prescott (1994) identified seven dimensions to consider when setting up physical learning environments for young children. Planning for these dimensions helps you balance classroom environments and provide for individual needs. Prescott describes each dimension as a continuum.

Softness/Hardness

Softness is expressed through the use of pillows, rugs, carpets, stuffed animals, beanbags, sofas, cushions, draped fabrics, lamps, and tablecloths. These help to make the classroom feel cozy and responsive to children. Be sure these meet fire codes. Bolsters, mats, and pillows may aid in positioning a child with physical disabilities. Sand, water, play dough, and fingerpaints also provide a sense of softness as children feel, touch, and mold them. Animals—guinea pigs, rabbits, hamsters, and gerbils—provide soft, sensory experiences for children. ***Hardness*** is expressed in the classroom with hard surfaces and materials—hard plastic, wood blocks, metal or wooden furniture, and tiled floors.

Open/Closed Materials

Open materials can be used in different ways and offer children choices. Examples include unit blocks, water, sand, and drama props and art centers. ***Closed*** materials, such as puzzles, often have one correct way of being used. Limiting how children use materials—requiring them to build only a barn with blocks or paint only red apples at the easel—restricts options and makes materials closed.

Simple/Complex

As children work with ***simple*** materials, add props to sustain interest. Once a material has been explored in its simplest form, make other tools or elements available. The material or activity becomes more ***complex***, more interesting, because of interactions that occur as children discover new uses for materials and props. All children need opportunities to show competence and to be challenged.

Intrusion/Seclusion

Define and label boundaries in the environment so that children understand where certain activities take place. Plan traffic patterns so that activities are not interrupted to let others pass by (***intrusion***). Plan for the mobility needs of children with special needs, and always provide areas where children can be for moments of needed solitude or ***seclusion***.

High Mobility/Low Mobility

Room arrangement encourages or discourages movement. Provide ***high mobility*** areas in the classroom to encourage young children to use gross motor skills. Young children need to use gross motor movements in the classroom as well as outdoors. Plan areas for activities—meeting, story, and rest times; art and book centers—requiring ***low mobility***. Access to all areas is critical for children with disabilities.

Safety/Risk

Children's ***safety*** is an important priority. Emphasize good health and safety practices. Encourage and support children as they take informed ***risks***. Knowing how to proceed carefully and safely is especially important for children with disabilities.

Large Group/Individual

Allow for a variety of group activities, both large and smaller groups, as well as times for individual experiences. Provide opportunities for children to choose large group, small group, or individual activities at different times during the day.

Scheduling

Effective scheduling is key to the success of an early childhood curriculum. Bredekamp and Rosegrant (1995) suggest four principles for developing schedules:

1. Include daily rituals and routines.
2. Balance open-ended and structured time.
3. Allow sufficient time for activities and routines.
4. Encourage children to develop awareness of time.

See Appendix for sample schedules.

The **ECERS** (see sidebar) provides evaluative descriptions of schedules.

The *Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale* or ECERS (Harms & Clifford,1980) is designed to assess the quality of center-based programs for children 2½ to 5 years of age. Also in this series, *The Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale* or ITERS is designed for children up to 30 months of age; and the *School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale* or SACERS addresses the needs of children from ages 5 to 12.

The 37 items on the ECERS are organized in seven categories: Personal Care Routines for Children, Furnishings and Display for Children, Language-Reasoning Experiences, Fine and Gross Motor Activities, Creative Activities, Social Development, and Adult Needs. This scale currently is being revised. The revised ECERS will include quality indicators for centers that include children with special needs. (Palsha, Wesley, Fenson, & Dennis, 1997)

Excellent schedules balance structure and flexibility and provide smooth transitions between actitivies. Plans are included to meet individual needs.

Good schedules balance structure and flexibility. Several activity periods, some indoors and some outdoors, are planned each day in addition to routine care.

Minimal schedules are either too rigid, with no time for individual interest, or too flexible (chaotic), with activities disrupting routines.

Inadequate schedules take up most of the day with routine care and have little planning for interesting activities either indoors or outdoors.

Routines

Activities that occur at the same time and in similar ways form the rituals and routines of the classroom. Consistent routines provide a framework for sequencing and processing activities while providing opportunities for children and adults to interact with each other. Vary daily activities to provide different kinds of experiences for children. Children's roles in typical preschool and kindergarten activities are described in the following section.

Planning Time

Children decide for themselves what they are going to do during work time. They indicate their plans to adults who help them think through and elaborate their ideas, record these plans, and assist them in getting started.

Work Time

Children carry out the projects and activities they have planned. Adults move, observe, assist, and support them as well as help them extend their ideas. Children who complete their initial plans, make and work on others.

Clean-Up Time

Children store unfinished projects. They sort, order, and put away materials they used during work time.

Snack Time

Children build a sense of family and community by making snack time a class activity. Try setting up snack time as a center to accommodate individual needs. Remember to monitor safe food handling practices.

Small Group

Children learn to refine and extend skills and concepts in small-group activities. Teachers observe and assess the work of children during small group times which provide both closed and open-ended experiences.

Outside Time

Children and adults engage in vigorous physical activity—riding, pushing or pulling, running, throwing, swinging, climbing, or rolling. Children may extend play from indoors to outdoors and make real the concepts they explored in the classroom. Children can also enjoy and appreciate the beauty of nature. As in all activities, adults encourage children to talk about what they are doing.

Rest Time

Some children will need time to sleep, while others will just need time to relax, unwind, and recharge after a busy morning of activity. Provide for both of these needs. Use a quiet transition, such as reading a story, between active time and rest time. This is a good time for teachers and assistants to nurture and connect with individual children. Children who need to sleep should be allowed to sleep. Children who do not require sleep should have other quiet options. Provide quiet music, books, drawing, soft seating, and mats for resting. Children with special needs may need rest periods throughout the day.

Meal Time

When possible, allow young children to eat meals in their classroom in a family-like atmosphere Eating is a very important part of a young child's day. Breakfast, lunch, and snack can be pleasant, fun, and stimulating. Arrange seating so children who have special needs can sit at the table with their peers whenever possible. This may involve taking a child out of a wheelchair to a position at the table. Mealtime can allow children to participate in table setting, food serving, and meal clean-up. In this setting, children can practice small motor skills when pouring, handling utensils, serving themselves, and eating. They learn social skills for conversing with peers and adults, and learn acceptable mealtime behaviors and manners. Meal and snack time provide opportunities to introduce a variety of healthy foods.

Circle Time

Children and adults meet together as a large group to sing and make up action songs, play musical instruments, move to music, play games, and discuss upcoming special events. This gathering encourages a sense of belonging to a group. Sometimes children with special needs may require additional attention—some may need props such as carpet squares to define a space or the physical assistance of an adult in order to participate with the group.

Recall/Reflection

Children need to process thoughts, encounters, and endeavors of the day. Reflection allows children to learn from each other's experiences. It enables children to think about all the things they did during the day.

Adult Planning

Specify a time during the day to revise, plan, and prepare for the next day. Review anecdotal notes, IEP goals, and children's work regularly. Set planning time when it is convenient within your schedule—work around meals, naps and playground schedules. Include children in planning by starting the day with circle time or planning with children as they finish breakfast.

Use schedules to provide children time to accomplish tasks and to finish what they start successfully. Planning time, work time, clean-up, and recall follow one after the other; work time should be the longest single time period. Encourage them to move at their own paces by planning for individual direction and timing.

Developing Schedules for Inclusive Classrooms

- In classrooms with children with special needs, fully integrate these children with their non-handicapped peers in small group assignments.
- Include time for routine care of special equipment—hearing aids or orthopedic braces—and for any special procedures, such as positioning the child.
- Incorporate special services—speech, language, occupational and physical therapies—into the classroom. Find ways these activities can include children without disabilities so that children with special needs do not feel singled out.
- Plan transitions with special needs of all children in mind. It may take longer, for example, for a child using a walker to get to the playground.
- Like many children—and adults too—children who have disabilities often have more energy in the morning. Try to schedule therapies and activities requiring concentrated attention before lunch. Allow children who are fatigued to rest as needed.
- As with all children, encourage arrival and departure times that allow relaxed conversations with parents. (Wesley, 1992)

Transitions

Some people say transitions are key indicators of effective schedules. Do children seem to know what is going to happen next? Are they consistently engaged throughout the day, or are there periods without purpose or direction? These strategies can help create smooth transitions:

- Rethink your daily schedule to see if there are transitions that can be eliminated by creating larger blocks of time.
- Follow a daily schedule to help children learn routines and activities of the day.
- Alternate active times with quieter times. Following outside time with story time, for example.
- Use signals that alert children to the beginning and ending of activities. For example, ten minutes before the end of an activity, walk around and say quietly, "Start finishing what you are doing; clean-up time will be in a few minutes."
- Designate spots in the room or on the playground for transition meeting places. As the class leaves the playground, they know to meet you by the sidewalk. As they finish clean up, they meet on the circle.
- Direct children to the next activity with special fun procedures—touching their noses or arms; singing; reciting poems, or doing fingerplays as they move.
- Begin the next activity quickly to capture attention of the children, perhaps before all the group has arrived. Station one adult at the next activity while a second adult helps the remaining children finish tasks. If the next experience is exciting—quick arrival assures holding a guinea pig while food is placed in its cage—children will arrive quickly to participate.

Strategies for Creating Smooth Transitions

- Provide children with plenty of notice before it is time to change activities. Let them know, for example, three minutes before that a transition is coming.

- Use environmental cues to prepare children for the next activity. Close the blinds, turn off the lights, and play soft music as naptime approaches. Talk about the food odors coming from the kitchen before lunch.

- Encourage children to prepare for the next activity by cleaning up or setting up. Giving them responsibilities for routine tasks stimulates their interest about activities and keeps them engaged.

- Follow consistent routines. When children know what to expect from day to day, they can better prepare themselves for transitions.

- Organize settings so materials are accessible for adults and children.

- Facilitate clean-up and make it easy for children to help by storing like things together and labeling storage bins or shelves with pictures to show where items go.

- Assign staff to areas of the room, not to students, whenever possible. When the same person routinely supervises an area or activity, that person becomes an expert who knows the abilities and interests of all children.

- Set up centers or activities ahead of time so children can start activities without waiting.

- Develop a repertoire of transition songs or games children can enjoy as they prepare to change activities, such as "This is the Way We ___________"

- Establish eye contact or touch children to get their attention. Call a child's name and give personal fun directions for moving on to the next activity. "Sam, clap your hands twice, turn around, then join your friends at the art center." Vary the directions you give to each child.

- Always tell children ahead of time if you plan to pick them up or touch them to help them change activities. Make this standard practice if you help a child with physical disabilities to move.

- Always talk to children about what you are doing with them, and what you are going to do next. (Wesley, 1992)

Sample Transition Activities

Arrival at School

- Make sure children know arrival routine. At the beginning of the year, have children role play after you have modeled what is expected.
- Sing a good morning song.
- Play a record or tape.
- Have arrival centers and activities available.
- Be there to greet children when they arrive.

Clean up

- Give adequate notice before clean-up.
- Use a signal when it is time to begin clean-up. The signal remains the same all year.

Example—

Begin to clap a rhythm to gain children's attention. Tell children to stop their work, look at you, and listen to directions when you give the signal. Sing a clean up song.

Example—

It's time to clean the room.
It's time to clean the room.
There's work to do. There's work to do.
It's time to clean the room.
(To the tune of "The Farmer in the Dell")

Listening Times

Use a chant or rhyme—

One, two three look at me.
One, two, three look at me.

I am going to close my eyes and count to three.
When I open them I am to see who is still as can be.
I touch my head.
I touch my toes.
I shake my hands.
Just to see them go!
I fold my arms.
I cross my feet.
I nod three times.
I take my seat.

(Oklahoma Department of Education, 1996)

Waiting Times

- Sing favorite songs and rhymes.
- Use fingerplays.
- Read short simple books.
- Point to a color for children to say chorally.
- Point to a shape for children to say chorally.

Getting from Large Group to Centers

- Use colors or articles of clothing to indentify who goes to centers.
  Examples: If you are wearing red (blue, green, black,) you may find a center.
  If you are wearing a sweater (shoes that tie, a buckle) go to a center
- Use actions to send children to centers.
  Examples: Pretend you are bees and buzz to centers.
  Tiptoe to centers.
- Have children stand one at a time, say their first and last names, and chose a center.
- Have a way for children to record the centers they chose each day.

Inside to Outside—Outside to Inside

- Pretend the class is a train and chug out to the playground.
- Pretend you are birds and fly to the playground.
- Gather children at the door and softly say the directions for the next activity.

Going Home

- Sing a good-bye song.
- Do fingerplays and rhymes.
- End the day with circle time. Talk about the day's activities and plans for the next day.

(Oklahoma Department of Education, 1996)

The Interpersonal Setting

While you have very definite goals and objectives for the young children in your programs, you know these are best achieved when you have flexibility to design programs that are responsive to children. Flexibility and responsiveness require careful planning based on thorough knowledge of:

- children in your class
- developmental expectations
- content of the discipline areas
- ways to organize for instruction
- context of family, school, and community.

Including assessment in the planning process allows you to demonstate that both children's and the program's goals have been met (Bredekemp and Rosegrant, 1995). In the classroom, observe regularly and thoughtfully so that making adjustments for individualized curriculum becomes second nature. The same toys, for instance blocks, work as well for a three-year-old who drags them around as for a five-year-old who makes castles with moats. As you plan a flexible program that responds to children's needs, consider the following questions:

- What is the developmental level of an individual child or group of children?
- What is the next step for each child or group of children?
- Why is this step important?
- How do we help a child or group take that step?

These questions are important as children learn new skills and acquire new knowledge. While children can do many things independently, there are many tasks or learnings that they cannot yet handle alone. You must know how much guidance each child needs in order for him or her to move to the next level of independence. (Vygotsky refers to this as the zone of proximal development.) For many children with special needs, adaptations are an important form of assistance to foster independence. Make adjustments in centers to extend activities or enhance them to support learning, to match learning styles, and to enhance achievement. Know how to vary activities so you can initiate them in different areas—both indoors and out. For instance, children learn math concepts at the sand table and when riding big wheels. They read, write, or draw with many chosen activities.

The Teacher's Roles

Your role is to create a varied and balanced classroom program where all children can be successful. The types of learning experiences you plan determine behaviors and roles children assume. An early childhood classroom must have a balance of child-initiated and teacher-directed learning experiences. Appropriate teaching behaviors range from non-directive to mediating to directive.

How Do You . . .

acknowledge?
Give attention and positive encouragement to keep a child engaged in an activity.

model?
Display a skill or desirable way of behaving in the classroom, through actions or with cues, prompts, or other coaching.

facilitate?
Offer short-term assistance to help a child achieve the next level of functioning (as an adult does when holding the back of a bicycle as a child pedals).

support?
Provide a fixed form of assistance, such as a bicycle training wheels, to help achieve the next level of functioning.

scaffold?
Set up challenges or assist children to work on the edge of their current competence.

co-construct?
Learn or work collaboratively with children on a problem or task, such as a model or block structure.

demonstrate?
Actively display a behavior or engage in an activity while children observe the outcome.

direct?
Provide specific directions for children's behavior within narrowly defined dimensions of error.

(Adapted from Bredekamp & Rosegrant, 1995)

Making Children Feel Welcome

Simple everyday experiences make children and families feel welcome.

- Hearing and expressing informal good mornings and other personal greetings
- Engaging in conversations with the teacher and other children
- Sharing room tasks with the teacher and children (watering plants, caring for pets, mixing paints, cleaning the sink)
- Questioning and having the teacher answer
- Planning with the teacher for a proposed activity
- Discussing challenges of group membership such as sharing equipment, taking turns, being considerate of others, sharing responsibilities, and being courteous
- Participating in friendly games, discussions, songs, and conversations
- Meeting all school personnel—the principal, custodian, nurse, librarian, cooks
- Receiving help, encouragement, and constructive suggestions in work-play activities
- Participating in a three-way friendly interchange, for example among a parent, teacher, and child
- Enjoying humorous situations with the teacher or other children
- Feeling safe to explore and try new things
- Receiving positive guidance instead of harsh punishment
- Hearing their names pronounced correctly
- Hearing some everyday phrases in their native language

Many factors working together create an interpersonal setting—the roles of adults in the classroom, the interactions among them and with the children, and the everyday language and tone. Your classroom must combine child-initiated and teacher-selected activities. By arranging and stocking the environment with children's individual needs in mind, you can assume a more facilitative, less directive approach.

Interactions

As an adult, you know many factors—the physical environment, the temperature, how much sleep you have had, your diet, the behavior of others, your schedule—affect your interactions with other adults and with children. As an early childhood professional, however, it is your responsibility to create an environment that facilitates positive interactions. To foster positive interactions in your classroom:

- Identify clear roles for adults.
- Plan activities and arrange materials ahead of time.
- Create easily accessible storage areas
- Provide soft areas where children and adults can sit together.
- Separate noisy from quiet areas.
- Provide nutritious meals and snacks.
- Provide ample rest time.
- Take breaks as needed.
- Pursue professional development activities to improve your skills.

Just as you plan physical space, daily schedules, and division of labor, plan ways to ensure positive interactions at school. The answers to these questions will help determine the quality of your interactions.

- When does staff interact most with children? Is it when there are problems?
- How are problems prevented and handled?
- Do you give a fair amount of attention to each child?
- How many children do you assign to teachers or assistants?
- How much physical affection do you show? What kind—holding, patting, rocking?
- When do you have physical contact with children? Is it only during routines such as helping children with coats?
- How do you respond to children who are hurt or upset?
- Are there times when you get down to children's level and make eye contact when you talk with children?
- How do you greet children and families? How do you arrange departures? How do you handle separation anxiety?
- Are children and adults relaxed throughout the day?
- Do you vary interactive styles to meet children's individual needs—calmer with a timid child, more outgoing with an outgoing child?
- How do you handle transitions?
- How do you show warmth?
- What is the quality of children's interactions with each other?
- How well are children with disabilities included? (Wesley, Dennis, Tyndall, & Fenson, 1997)

Specific suggestions for fostering positive attitudes for children with special needs appear in the Appendix.

Language and Tone

Many early childhood professionals can quickly assess the tone of a room by visiting for a few minutes on a typical day. Yet, tone is hard to define. It refers to the feeling or atmosphere of the classroom, and language is a key indicator. You should periodically discuss classroom tone with other adults working in the classroom. Below are a few questions to serve as springboards for these discussions.

- What does the room sound like? Do adults and children seem relaxed and happy; or are voices strained, irritable, or angry?
- Do children and adults mutually respect each other? How can you tell?
- How does the curriculum address social skills development?
- Is language used primarily to control children's behavior?
- Do teachers and other adults provide ample time for children to respond to directions and questions?
- Do teachers use and respond to alternative forms of communication used by children with disabilities, such as signs, pictures or communication boards?
- Do teachers make a conscious effort to have an informal conversation with each child everyday?
- Do teachers and others verbally expand upon ideas presented by the child?
- What kinds of questions do teachers ask children? Are most questions open-ended, or are they predominantly yes/no questions?
- How much adult-to-adult talking occurs throughout the day? What is it about? (Harms & Clifford, 1980, p. 19-20 & 32)

Stages of Children's Development

As you observe children in centers and in other learning activities, you gain much information about their stages of development. Use this knowledge to plan, implement, assess, and adjust your program.

- Play
- Symbolic representation
- Artistic representation
- Block building
- Dramatic play
- Sand and water play

Stages of Play

As children play, they learn about the world and people and things in the world. You can observe their insights in the developmental stages of play.

0-24 months ***Exploratory or sensorimotor play***

Children engage in activities simply for enjoyment. Examples include repetitive motor movements, such as pouring water into and out of containers, making noises with mouth or objects, and repeatedly climbing up and down steps.

9-24 months ***Relational play***

Children use objects in play for the purposes for which they were intended. They use simple objects correctly, such as a brush for the hair; combine related objects, such as a truck and driver; and make objects do what they are made to do, such as pumping the handle on a top.

24 months + ***Constructive play***

Children have a goal in mind that requires transforming objects into a new configuration. Examples include building a fence with blocks or making a face from clay.

21-72 months ***Dramatic play***

Children pretend to do something or be someone. They pretend with objects (drink from a cup), pretend without objects (brush their teeth with a finger), or pretend through other inanimate objects (have dolls, pretend to feed the animals).

36 + months ***Games with rules play***

Games with rules (Rubin, 1984; Smilansky, 1968) involve the child in an activity with accepted rules or limits. The game implies shared expectations and a willingness to conform to agreed-upon procedures (Garvey, 1977). An element of competition may also be suggested, either with another child or with himself or herself (Rubin, 1984). The game can be a preset standard game, such as the card game, "Go Fish," or it can be a game with rules the child makes up.

60 months + ***Rough-and-Tumble play***

Boisterous and physical are two ways to describe rough-and-tumble play which Garvey (1977) defines as "action patterns that are performed at a high pitch of activity, usually by a group," although two children can also engage in rough-and tumble play. It can include such things as running, hopping, tickling, playful punching, or rolling around on the floor. Aggressive behavior, in contrast to rough-and-tumble, is not done in a playful manner.

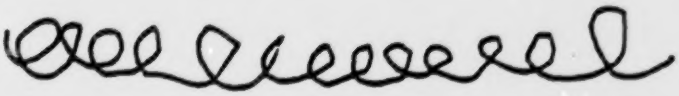
Beginnings of Symbolic Representation

Children progress developmentally through stages in the ways they perceive writing or symbolic representation of thoughts on paper. Children's early markings reveal a striking commonality which emerges from all children of all cultures. An easy way to think about these stages may be to consider them children's unstated definitions of what makes writing.

The stages of early writing reveal once again the powerful desire of children to communicate. Learning to write is basically an act of discovery. When adults honor each achievement, it leads to new discoveries and eventually to quality forms of writing.

Stage 1—The Recurring Principle

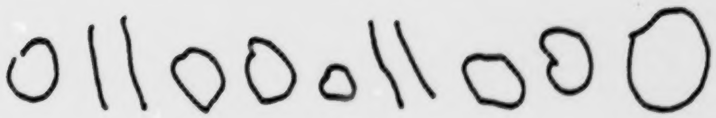
Writing is the same mark made over and over.



Stage 2—The Generative Principle

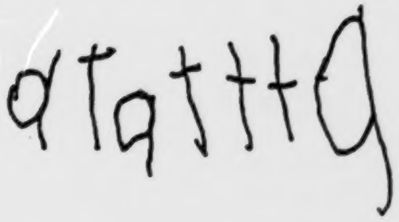
Phase A

The marks that make writing are not all the same. Some are different from others.



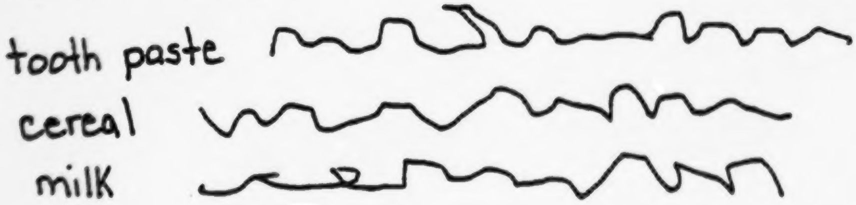
Phase B

Writing is special marks made on paper.



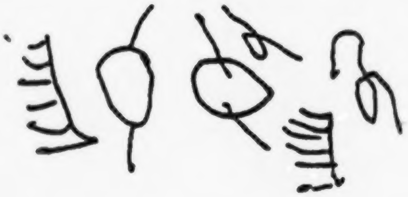
Stage 3—The Sign Principle

The marks on paper stand for something, and these marks are not pictures of those things. This stage does not always follow Stage 2. It frequently appears to develop with Stage 2 and occasionally appears in conjunction with Stage 1.



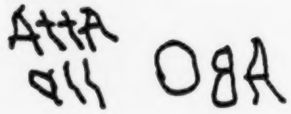
Stage 4—The Flexibility Principle.

If some marks (letters) are known, others can be made from them, *but* not all marks are letters. Also, the same letter can be made in different ways. Sense of word, letter, and sound begin to develop.



Stage 5—The Linear Principle

Words are written on the page from left to right and from top to bottom. There is space between words. Sense of word, letter, and sound begins to develop.



Like all developmental stages, early writing development is not linear and clear cut. Children move in and out of stages in lulls and spurts. These transformations occur over long stretchs of time and after many, many experiences with putting marks on paper in a relatively directed manner. Encourage writing development by providing a variety of materials, many concrete experiences for children to write about, and ample opportunities for children to write.

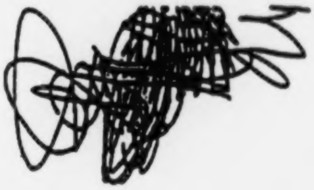
Suggest that they write about experiences. Allow children to move slowly, easily, and confidently through stages and to incorporate writing as a natural part of life's activity by exposing them to environments that include much printed material. Let children see adults writing for many different purposes. Your observations about children's progress through the stages of writing yield crucial information about their understanding of the world.

Stages of Artistic Development

With drawing and painting, children move through a predictable series of stages as they develop their artistic skills.

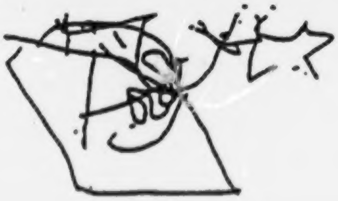
Stage 1—Disordered Scribble-Random Marks on Paper

The child does not seem to realize an ability to control the marks made on the paper.



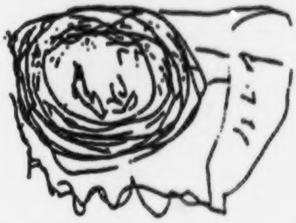
Stage 2—Controlled Scribble

The child realizes there is a connection between the mark on the paper and the movement of his arm. Different colors may be used.



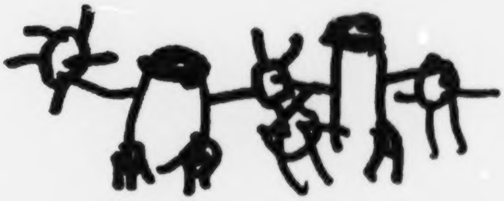
Stage 3—Naming the Scribble

Naming a scribble signifies a change in the child's thinking. Previously the child gained satisfaction from just making the marks, now these marks are connected to something meaningful. The child will make a scribble and then name it (e.g., "a doggie" or "lunchtime").



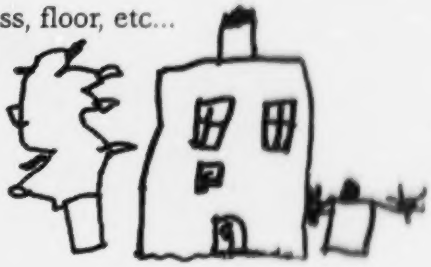
Stage 4—Floating Figures

Drawings begin to resemble people. Drawings gradually gain detail.



Stage 5—Baseline

The figure is grounded on grass, floor, etc...



Stages of Block Play

Children go through the four stages of block play.

Stage 1—Carrying Blocks (functional play)

Young children who have not had an opportunity to play with blocks have a tendency to carry them around or to transport them in moving toys. Children are experimenting with the blocks to get a sense of what they look and feel like, and to know what to do with them.

Stage 2—Piling and Laying Blocks on the Floor

Children make tall towers or long trains; they pile and organize blocks in any way imaginable and add different props such as small people, toy cars or trucks.

Stage 3—Connecting Blocks to Create Structures (constructive play)

During Stage 3, children are actually moving from piling blocks to making constructions. Roads link bridges and problem-solving begins. Most children in Stage 3 (typically three-and four-year-olds) have had some experience playing with blocks. Some of the techniques that children have developed are:

- *Making enclosures.* Children put blocks together to create an enclosed space. Eventually they will use the enclosed space for dramatic play. This helps children think about mathematical concepts, particularly area and geometry.
- *Bridging.* Children first make bridges (setting two blocks upright and laying one block across uprights) as part of an enclosure and then part of their dramatic play. This helps teach balance and eye-hand coordination.
- *Designs.* Children are fascinated with patterns, form, and symmetry. They like to repeat their designs, sometimes until all the blocks are used. This helps children notice likenesses and differences and develops motor skills.

Stage 4—Making Elaborate Constructions (dramatic play)

By this time many children are experienced builders (four to six years old). Children adapt to changes in their structures and build above, over, and around objects. The structures are remarkable, complex, and ingenuious. At this stage children can label their constructions and often use them for dramatic play activities.

Stages of Dramatic Play

Stage 1—Imitative Role Play—As early as age one

The child tries to talk, act, and dress like someone he knows, using real objects as props. The child depends on an element of reality in play. For example, she may pick up a pot and pretend "to cook like daddy."

Stage 2—Make-believe Play

Child's play is enriched by imagination. Being less dependent on concrete props for role play, he may use a stick for a microphone or a blanket draped over his head for long hair.

Stage 3—Socio-dramatic Play

This stage includes pieces of Stages 1 and 2, but it stands apart from them because it requires more time and verbal interaction between two or more children as they plan roles. For example, several children might play doctor's office: one child is the doctor, one child is the nurse, and another is the patient. The children talk about their roles and how the scene will be acted out.

Stages of Sand and Water Play

Children approach these natural materials with delight and enthusiasm. It is possible to observe stages in the ways they use materials.

Stage 1—Exploration

Children actively discover the properties of both materials, which lend themselves well to sensory experiences. Children feel the grittiness of sand between their fingers and the cool wetness of water as it streams down their elbows. They discover what these materials can do and what they can do with the materials. They observe differences between wet and dry sand. Most of the time children are happy to explore independently even when other children share the center.

Stage 2— Meaningful play

Children use all the information gathered from the previous stage. At the sand table, children play with molded sand forms—making mountains, barns, roads. At the water table, they conduct experiments and test hypothesis. At this stage children are more likely to work together on specific projects.

Stage 3—Creative play

In this third stage children work cooperatively to represent real life experiences in their use of the materials. The water table becomes the local lake ready for the area boat race. Designs, landscapes and structures become much more detailed at the sand table. Imaginative scenarios abound.

Summary

Establishing your early childhood classroom and program is a multifaceted venture. It requires fitting many pieces together like a mosaic. The beauty of the mosaic depends on the ability of the craftsmen to select the appropriate pieces in the right sizes and quantities and to place them in the best spots. Teachers are the craftsmen of the classroom and must make good choices too.

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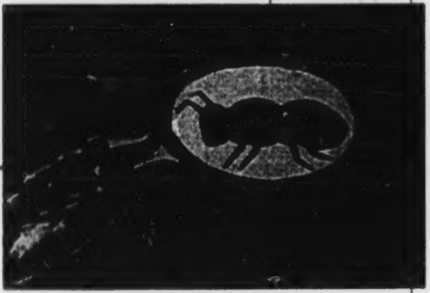
Chapter Highlights

Selecting Teaching Methods and Strategies

The Environment
  Centers for the Early Childhood Classroom
  Arranging the Environment to Support Goals
  Dimensions of Environment
Scheduling
  Routines
  Transitions
The Interpersonal Setting
  The Teacher's Roles
  Making Children Feel Welcome
  Interactions
  Language and Tone
Stages of Children's Development
  Stages of Play
  Beginnings of Symbolic Representation
  Stages of Artistic Development
  Stages of Block Play
  Stages of Dramatic Play
  Stages of Sand and Water Play
Summary
References



Chapter 4

How Do I Assess the Children's Progress?

2/40
AN APPLE A DAY

4. How Do I Assess the Children's Progress?

AS SCHOOLS ARE CALLED UPON to be more accountable and demonstrate how effectively they meet their goals, preschools and kindergartens are asked to become part of this accountability system. Assessment and evaluation processes take on great significance. Assessment is "the process of observing, recording, and otherwise documenting the work children do and how they do it, as a basis for a variety of educational decisions that affect the child," (NAEYC and NAECS/SDE, 1991, p. 34). Many components are involved in good assessment.

The assessment process begins before children ever come to school. When you review reports from other professionals—child care providers or early interventionists, for example—who have worked with particular children and their families, you are beginning. The process continues as teachers prepare learning environments with established goals and objectives paired with ways to determine whether those goals and objectives have been achieved.

The Disciplines Section in the Appendix offers overviews of goals and objectives of state adopted curriculum for grades K-2 in English language arts, mathematics, the arts, healthful living, science, and social studies and gives suggestions for preschool. Curriculum models in Chapter 2 suggest various ways of organizing and teaching these goals and objectives. Good choices in assessment and evaluation strategies ensure that information from the children and their work is continuously used in planning and designing learning environments for them.

Preschool programs have the flexibility to choose the model that best helps them meet their goals. The North Carolina General Assembly gives local school systems authority to select or design appropriate and useful early childhood assessment procedures. (Standardized testing of children before third grade is prohibited.) Choosing the best approach for your program can be challenging.

Learning about Children from Their Families

Before school starts

- Home visits
- A brief telephone call to each family
- A "get-acquainted" meeting for all families
- A questionnaire to all families
- An initial parent-teacher conference

During the school year

- Informal conversations as families drop off or pick up children
- Brief telephone calls just to keep in touch
- Regular conferences, with invitations for parents to bring specific information, suggestions, or questions
- Conversations during meetings, pot-luck meals, and other school events
- A class album, with contributions of photographs from each family

Chapter 4, *How Do I Assess the Children's Progress?* addresses

Conditions for effective assessment

Plans to guide teachers and administrators

Techniques for observing, documenting, and recording to make decisions for children and their programs

Methods for **organizing** information for best use

Suggestions for drawing appropriate **conclusions** from information

Ways to **plan or modify instruction** or programs based on this information

Possibilities for **sharing** information

Conditions for Effective Assessment

Children's skills, interests, and needs are constantly changing; and they most likely show themselves as they really are when in familiar settings, among people they trust, and involved in activities they find interesting. Teachers, therefore, need to gather information from different sources and viewpoints from other professionals, from families, and from the children themselves. Teachers must also gather information at regular intervals over several months before they can say they know the children in their classroom. The examples on the next pages suggest ways to do this effectively.

Moreover, it is important to have criteria for choosing and using effective assessment. The following questions are based on the *Guidelines for Appropriate Assessment for Planning Instruction and Communicating with Parents* developed by the NAEYE and NAECS/SDE. Thinking about how you can answer yes to each of these questions will help you evaluate your program's assessment procedures.

1. Is the assessment procedure based on the goals and objectives of the specific curriculum used in the program?
2. Are the results of assessment used to benefit children, i.e., to plan for individual children, improve instruction, identify children's interests and needs, and individualize instruction, rather than label, track or fail children?
3. Does the assessment procedure address all domains of learning and development—social, emotional, physical and cognitive—as well as children's feelings and dispositions toward learning?

Children Tell Us How to Assess

We know from children	How to Assess
Children are most likely to show themselves as they really are when they are in familiar settings, with people they trust, involved in activities that draw on typical behaviors. Children are more likely to be motivated and perform better when they are engaged in interesting and meaningful tasks.	Observe children performing typical tasks in comfortable circumstances that represent normal classroom activities. Develop techniques to record children's activities quickly, without disrupting class activities, for example, using sticky pads or labels to jot quick notes.
Information from home can help teachers conduct comprehensive assessments.	Ask families about children's usual activities at home. What do children tell you about class activities? What do they share with you about what they have learned? What do they do when they leave school?
Ages 3 through 7 are a time of rapid development. Children grow and change as they mature, gain experience, and learn. Information about children and what they can do quickly becomes out dated.	Establish on-going and regular data collection methods to provide current information for planning for individual children and for groups.
	Assess children with on-going procedures conducted in a variety of circumstances.
	Be careful about the information used to make long term decisions.
Early childhood programs have goals in several areas or domains (intellectual, physical, social and emotional, content-specific) that follow age-appropriate learning expectations.	Use knowledge of age-appropriate learning expectations to plan assessment that allows children to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and dispositions in all areas.
	Refer to developmental charts to establish expectations.

Children Tell Us How to Assess (cont.)

We know from children	How to Assess
Children learn and develop at different rates in different domains. They show what they are able to do in many different ways. One assessment is unlikely to generate information about performance in all domains.	Use a variety of techniques to let children demonstrate their abilities and provide rich pictures of performance, within and across domains. Be careful not to generalize information about performance in one area to other areas.
Information about children's health can provide important assessment details. Information from previous childcare or preschool settings can add to your understandings of children.	Realize that every activity provides information that can help with decisions about what children can do and what they need next. Look for patterns that show development. Combine information from many sources, including health records and previous childcare providers.
Children come to school with a variety of experiences and abilities. Testing ethics require that evaluation procedures allow persons whose performance is being assessed to demonstrate their best performance.	Accomodate cultural, physical, social, and economic differences to be sure that assessment results reflect true information about the domain being evaluated.
Children are typically motivated to do things that are important to them and valued by others, including other children and adults who are important to them.	Use tasks and processes that are meaningful to children and generate information that is useful to parents, teachers, and other educators.

4. Does assessment provide useful information to teachers to help them do a better job?
5. Does the assessment procedure rely on teachers' regular and periodic observations and record-keeping of children's everyday activities and performance so that results reflect children's behavior over time?
6. Does the assessment procedure occur as part of the ongoing life of the classroom rather than in an artificial, contrived context?
7. Does the assessment procedure evaluate performance rather than only test skills in isolation?
8. Does the assessment rely on multiple sources of information about children—such as collections of their work, results of teacher interviews and dialogues, as well as observations?
9. Does the assessment procedure reflect individual, cultural and linguistic diversity? Is it free of cultural, language , and gender bias?
10. Do children appear comfortable and relaxed during assessment rather than tense or anxious?
11. Does the assessment procedure support parents' confidence in their children and their ability as parents rather than threaten or undermine parents' confidence?
12. Does the assessment examine children's strengths and capabilities rather than just their weaknesses or what they do not know?
13. Is the teacher the primary assessor and are teachers adequately trained for this role?
14. Does the assessment procedure involve collaboration among teachers, children, administrators, and parents? Is information from parents used in planning instruction and evaluating children's learning? Are parents informed about assessment information?

15. Do children have an opportunity to reflect on and evaluate their own learning?
16. Are children assessed in supportive contexts to determine what they are capable of doing with assistance as well as what they can do independently?
17. Is there a systematic procedure for collecting assessment data that facilitates its use in planning instruction and communicating with parents?
18. Is there a regular procedure for communicating the results of assessment to parents in meaningful language (rather than letter or number grades) that reports children's individual progress? (NAEYC, 1992).

Assessment and Evaluation

Preschool educators must be very sure that they understand and use these processes appropriately. Even the terms are used interchangeably and sometimes inappropriately. *The Primary Program* suggests that

> ***...assessment is the process of gathering evidence of what a child can do. Evaluation is the process of interpreting that evidence and making judgments and decisions based on that evidence. The quality of information gained through assessment determines the quality of evaluation; that is, evaluation is only as good as the assessment on which it is based.***
>
> ***Assessment and evaluation form part of one process. In the context of the classroom, teachers carry out both processes, often almost simultaneously. For example, a teacher's observations of a child and conference with that child (assessment) may lead to an immediate decision (evaluation) about instruction. ...we use the terms assessment and evaluation together, reflecting the integrated nature of the process. (Nebraska Department of Education, 1993)***

Plans

With such a wealth of information available, it is advisable to have criteria for gathering or using the information. Assessment plans help teachers collect information on each developmental domain, each curriculum area or discipline. Based on the goals and objectives established by your program, you may design a plan to suit local timelines, policies, and priorities. You may adopt or modify one of the published systems if it suits your needs. Examples of available materials include the *High/Scope Child Observation Record* (COR) and the *Work Sampling System* which are in the appendix.

Assessment plans help you think about the time you will need to collect information about each child. By developing an assessment plan, you will know what information you want to collect, how you will observe, and how you will record information. Records must be comprehensive.

Getting Started

Begin with an assessment plan

- identify why you are doing the assessment—to plan instruction, to confer with families, for program accountability
- specify class or individual learning goals that you plan to assess
- identify potential sources of information
- decide where you will observe or what documentation you will collect
- consider any local policies that will affect your assessment—for example, report card requirements

Modify the following timeline to suit your situation

- use the first two weeks of school to get the classroom routine established before you begin observation for assessing growth and development
- establish a timeframe for observing children and collecting examples of their work
- take two weeks at the end of each cycle to summarize information
- schedule time to send information home and have conferences
- start the next cycle

Systematic approaches can ensure that you collect information on each child, not only on those who stand out because they exceed or fail to meet expectations. The information on each child must come from several sources to allow you to see that child from a perspective other than your own. This is particularly important in classes where teachers and children come from different cultural, ethnic, or language backgrounds.

Techniques

Every child's activity offers information that can help with decisions about what the child can do and what the child needs next. You can get information to assess learning and development when you observe children, collect samples of their work, and talk with families, children, and other teachers and professionals. You may want to use several of the following techniques.

Tips for Recording Observations

- Make brief, objective notes that can be transferred easily to files or folders.
- Use sticky pads, address labels, small index cards, class lists, sheets with preprinted boxes that can be cut apart, legal pads, or binders.
- Keep recording materials readily available. Have them in several places around the classroom, use a pocket or "fanny pack", keep a pencil or pen on a chain in your pocket or around your neck.
- Let children help by tallying their activities at specified times and places during the day. They can "sign-in" to centers, write or draw activities in journals, dictate activities to classroom assistants or into tape recorders, use a date stamp on their work.
- Remember to allow time to view and analyze audio tapes and video tapes.
- Computers and simple tally sheets can reduce time recording and analyzing observations.
- Write name, date, and brief description of importance of your observation on all notes and samples of children's work.

Observation

One of the best ways to find out what children can do is to simply watch them in action. Observe children everyday in a variety of activities. There are a number of strategies you can use to focus observations and gain information about the children in your class. You may use open-ended narrative records or structured observation forms. The choice depends on the information you need and your personal preference.

Samples

Examples of children's work provide first-hand, descriptive information about progress toward learning goals and objectives. Examining samples of children's work over time shows patterns of growth and change. Portfolios are one way to store children's work.

Conferences

Conferences are the most common way to collect assessment information from parents. (Questionnaires and developmental check lists help you get information about children's out-of-school activities.) The information that families share at the beginning of the school year and periodically thereafter enriches your understanding of every child in your class and helps you write instructional plans and evaluations. Family information is crucial in designing goals and objectives for IEPs. Families know children's interests, strengths, previous experiences, and temperaments in the home setting. In

conferences, parents should to be encouraged to share their ideas as well as their expectations. During the year, you can also gather information from conferences with children and conferences with teachers and other professionals.

Anecdotal Records

These are short, written descriptions of what children can do and how they go about doing it. Obviously, you won't be able to write down everything that happens in your classroom, so you need to have a plan for the types of things that you want to record this way. You might focus on literacy goals during one week, for example, and on mathematics goals during another. You can record spontaneous examples or you can introduce specific materials and activities to make certain types of behavior more likely to occur. Making notes for anecdotal records will be possible only when children are engaged independently with materials and activities. Even then, you will probably be able to jot only

Examples of anecdotal records

Always ensure your records are as objective and free of bias as possible. Make a careful distinction between what you actually see and hear (Example B) and your opinions or interpretations of those observations (Example A).

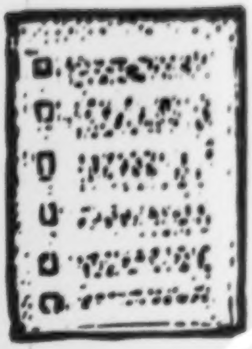
Consider these examples

Example A	9/15 10:00 a.m.	Ben counts well.
Example B	9/15 10:00 a.m.	Ben counted the six boys at circle time, pointing to each one and assigning the appropriate number.

brief reminders which will have to be expanded later when you transfer your notes to children's individual records. You will find it easier to make the quick notes you need if you keep a supply of post-it notes or small index cards either with you or in several areas throughout the classroom.

Checklists

Grids or checklists are useful to summarize or capture information about what children do over time, although they cannot capture the rich detail that anecdotal records provide. You might want a record, for example, of all the learning centers used by the children in your classroom each day. Using a grid, you might list the children's names in the left column and the learning centers across the top. Then check the areas when you see a child using a center. Kept over a period of time, records like this can help determine whether particular children are avoiding particular types of activities, or whether some of your interest centers are failing to attract children at all. Children can assist you with this type of record-keeping. Even preschoolers can check in by signing their names to a list when they have snack or when they want to use the computer. Some teachers develop symbol systems to record more details about their observations on the checklists—the level of skill, or the length of time children spend in an area. See Appendix for a checklist you may customize for your own use.



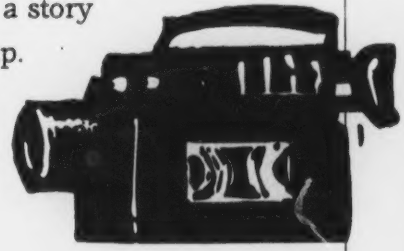
Checklists are particularly useful for summarizing information collected in other formats. Go through anecdotal records or children's work and note what they have done over a period of time. *The Work Sampling System* provides developmental checklists, with spaces for teachers to record, the level at which children demonstrate specific behavioral indicators in seven domains. Each item on the *Work Sampling* checklists, for example, refers to a specific set of goals and performance indicators described in the supporting materials. The *High/Scope Child Observation Record* looks at developmental milestones for the key experiences identified in the High/Scope curriculum. If you choose to use a ready-made developmental checklist, it is important to study the system behind it.

Technology

Technology can help you collect a rich variety of information quickly and easily, while giving you the opportunity to re-visit your observations. Rather than struggling to describe an elaborate block structure in words, for example, take a photograph and note how the structure extends and duplicates a particular pattern to indicate mathematical thinking.

Camcorder

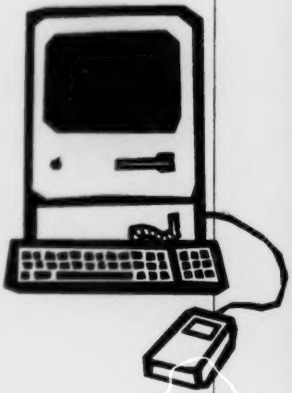
Using a camcorder (either on a tripod or in the hands of an assistant) to videotape the group of children as you read them a story lets you focus on the story and on managing the group. Later, you can review the tape to locate detailed evidence of each child's ability to listen and respond. You can note this evidence in writing in the child's record,



or you can use videoprinting technology to capture still images. Some teachers have invited children to help them select and print still images to illustrate specific achievements. Regular videotaping gives you a visual record of children's progress in specific areas.

Audiotaping

Another particularly useful tool for documenting language and literacy skills is the tape recorder. Placing a cassette recorder in the dramatic play center enables you to document the speaking abilities of many children while you are busy observing elsewhere in the classroom. (Of course, this assumes that you know your children well enough to recognize who is speaking when you listen to the tape later.) To document language and literacy skills of individual children over time, consider providing a blank cassette tape for each child in your class at the beginning of the year. Once a month, schedule a few minutes to look at a picture book with each child and record the accompanying conversation. State the date when you begin to record and don't rewind the tape when you finish. By the end of the year you will have an audio record of the child's growing literacy skills— commenting on the action in the books, making up creative endings, guessing what will happen next, and so on. With older children you can use the same technique to capture their reading progress.



Computers

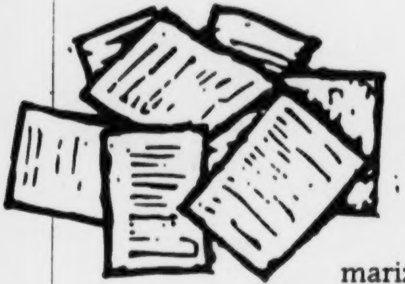
Computer programs are available to help record and organize your observations of children. The *High Scope Child Observation Record* is one example. You may choose to design your own systems for recording information, using word processing or database programs. A record keeping system should be easy to use and a help to you, not an added chore or an end in itself.

Organizing Information

The sheer volume of information can seem overwhelming. However, the investment of your time and energy will be well repaid when you find your records to be a rich source of curriculum ideas—as well as proof of your effectiveness. Remember, assessment is not about creating the perfect record for all time; it is about really getting to know the children in your classroom and making the best decisions for them. The more you practice these techniques for observing and documenting children's performance, the more thoroughly you will know your children. The more you get to know them, the more you will find yourself noticing their accomplishments and unique learning styles. This information will guide you to the heart of all good teaching—providing learning opportunities for children that meet their individual needs.

Routines

Even when assessment is a regular part of your classroom activities, documenting and analyzing information takes time. Make a plan



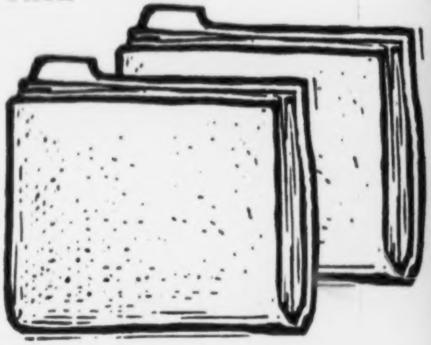
that helps you to divide and conquer. The *Work Sampling System* suggests fall, winter, and spring cycles of nine weeks for observing children and collecting work samples, followed by two weeks to review and summarize information. Set up your data collection to ensure that the cycles are compatible with your school's schedule for reporting children's progress. For children who have an IEP, there will be specified dates for documented assessment. Allow yourself time to analyze all of the information you have collected, prepare reports, share information with families, and modify the classroom and curriculum based on what your analysis shows you about children in your class.

Once you decide how much time you have to observe children and collect samples during each cycle, you can determine how you will divide that time to insure that you collect all the information you need about each child. You might want to spend one week on each domain addressed by your curriculum: language and literacy, for example, followed by mathematics, social skills, and so on. Then you would need to find a way to focus on individual children during that week. If you have classroom help, you can assign responsibility for specific children. You can make the task still more manageable by deciding to observe particular children on each day of the week. By designating regular times for observing each child and each domain in this way, you sensitize yourself to the types of information you need to collect—even if you don't happen to capture it all on the day you planned. It is also a good idea to schedule some down time during the observation cycle, where you can catch your breath or go back to collecting information on children who were absent when you planned to observe them.

Using Portfolios to Organize Information

Portfolios are purposeful collections of children's work intended to show growth and development over time. They provide a way of organizing information about what a child can do as well as what that child tries to do. They are not scrapbooks or simple accumulations of children's products. The goals and objectives for your program should help you decide what to include in the portfolio and how to organize the information. One useful method is to provide a section of the portfolio for each domain or curriculum area. Use a face sheet or some other method to keep track of the areas you have documented to date.

While portfolios themselves are important tools for assessment, the process by which they are assembled is also important. Children can help collect and select materials for their portfolios. Their role in selection increases as they move from preschool to kindergarten and the elementary grades. Make the process easy for them by providing clearly marked receptacles to store portfolio items. Drawers, plastic bins, wall pockets, or large tagboard folders stored in milk crates are all possibilities. Pre-



Documenting Children's Development

Cognitive Development—Notes or pictures of child with books and other print material, teacher's notes—perhaps with photos—showing how child makes choices or uses equipment and materials

Social Emotional—Teacher's notes and photos describing child's relationships, at play alone and with other children, of child helping in the classroom

Language Development—Audio tapes of child speaking; teacher's notes on sentence structure, vocabulary, and question-answer skills; lists of favorite books and rhymes

Physical Development—Photographs and videotapes of child during physical activities; teacher's notes of child's involvement in games, developing handedness, and coordination

Responsibility Development—Teacher's notes, photographs, or videotapes showing child giving or receiving help; about situations where child altered behavior to be more appropriate or in response to another person; of child helping with classroom duties. Children's drawings; paintings; or stories about relationships with others, sharing, taking care of people, pets, toys, or other things school and kindergarten children delight in using date stamps on their drawings or writing samples. Older children might be able to dictate or write their reasons for selecting particular items for their portfolios.

Organizing the items into sections for each developmental domain or discipline area provides order and focus to collected material. The intent of the portfolio is to include examples of the child's work that show progress toward your program's goals and objectives. For children with an IEP, you need to collect samples that show progress toward IEP goals and objectives. Include notations on post-it notes or small index cards with each item, explaining why it was selected and how it relates to goals and objectives. When you know you will be collecting examples of a particular type of work from several children, duplicate explanations of particular activities, pointing out what to look for in the child's work, and attach a copy to the individual examples. For example, you might write an explanation of all the ways that preschool children's scribbles reveal knowledge of print and include that information with each child's writing sample.

Periodically reviewing portfolios helps you keep them organized and alerts you to areas where you might need more representative examples of a child's work. This effort also helps you to prepare for parent conferences by ensuring that specific examples of work, as well as overall patterns of development, are fresh in your mind. If you involve children in deciding what to keep and what to send home, they can begin developing habits of evaluating and reflecting on their own learning. Once you have reviewed materials and items in portfolios and other types of documentation you have collected, you are ready to begin forming conclusions about what you have learned.

If you are having difficulty collecting portfolio items to illustrate certain skills, you might take another look at your classroom to determine if you are making enough opportunities for this type of work available and attractive to children. Are there enough interesting materials to explore? Are they attractively displayed and organized to prompt children to use them in purposeful ways and to sort them as they clean up? Remember, when several children in a group seem to be having difficulty with a particular objective, you may need to devise ways to offer not just more of the same type of activities, but new activities that will help them approach the task with different strategies and new interest.

Drawing Conclusions

Once you have collected information, your next step is to evaluate it to determine children's progress in terms of established goals and objectives. Think about this road map analogy: Not only do you want to know that you have traveled several miles, but you want to know that those miles have brought you closer to your destination. Not only do you want to know how children have grown and developed in the weeks and months you've known them, you want to know that they are progressing toward goals and objectives. (Programs such as Title I, Even Start, and Preschool Programs for Children with

Disabilities require such evaluations.) As discussed in Chapter 2, goals and objectives are derived from three sources—

- Expectations based on child development knowledge
- Expectations based on curriculum content areas
- Expectations of your local community, school system, and families.

As you study the materials you have collected over a period of weeks or months, compare each child's individual profile with the goals for the class keeping in mind individual developmental needs. Consider all the information you have collected before drawing conclusions. Remember to consider information from the child's family and other professionals in addition to the material in the child's portfolio and your own observation notes. Because young children change and develop in spurts, express conclusions in terms of current performance, and be ready to revise them when new evidence arises.

Documenting Learning

Language arts. Dictated stories; children's pictures, scribbles, and writing; teacher's notes of activities that show developing skills and understanding of concepts including listening and relationships among talking, reading, and writing; teacher's notes on conversations, student conferences, and retelling of stories or personal experiences; teacher's notes illustrating developing speaking skills and ability to understand and follow directions; lists of favorite books, rhymes, and finger plays

Mathematics. Teacher's notes about application of mathematical concepts during class activities; photographs of children sorting, grouping, matching, or measuring; art work that demonstrates evolving understanding of shapes; photos or sketches of children's constructions

If your expectations are based soundly in knowledge of child development and learning expectations, you will probably conclude that most children are progressing as expected and they are in the process of mastering many of the performance indicators identified for each curriculum area. If many or most of the children in your classroom are performing below or above expectations, you may need to re-examine and adjust those expectations. When, however, after careful consideration you determine that a particular child's performance does not meet expectations, you are faced with another decision.

Documenting Learning

The Arts. Teacher's notes or photographs of children engaging in dramatic play; teacher's notes or photographs of children using clay, paint, paper, found objects, and other materials to create, explore, or represent ideas; teacher's notes and/or pictures of child participating in movement and dance, enjoying music, and exploring sounds and rhythm patterns

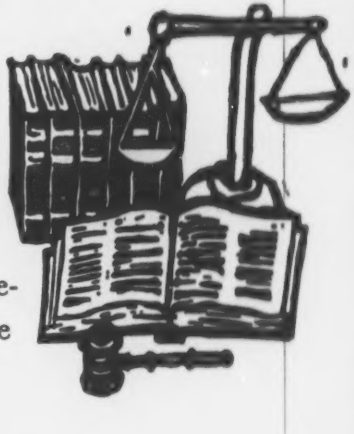
Science. Records of children's observations, such as feeding schedule and amounts for classroom pets or watering schedule for plants and gardens; teacher's notes or photographs of children using tools; photographs that show children exploring the environment and experimenting with weights, measurements, and natural phenomena indoors and out of doors

Social Studies. Teacher's notes on children's observations during community field trips, children's drawings or stories of family and community, photographs of children's block representations of community, teacher's notes about children's discussion of sequence of events or observations of geographic features, observations of children's participation in classroom decision making, notes and photographs of children during dramatic play

Sometimes the difference between a child's performance and established expectations is relatively small, and you can develop a plan to help that child improve in specific areas. This option is discussed in greater detail in the next section of this chapter. At other times, the difference between a child's performance and your expectations warrants closer examination, and you might decide to refer the child for evaluation for special education and related services. (See description of the referral process under Preschool Transition/Placement Committee in the Appendix) Remember that children in kindergarten and beyond may need special services because of advanced abilities as well as because of disabilities.

If you use the assessment techniques described in this chapter, you will make such a referral only after observing a child closely over extended periods of time. Required procedures for identifying children with special needs, definitions of required screenings and evaluations, and required qualifications of persons conducting screenings and evaluations are all contained in the manual entitled, *North Carolina Procedures Governing Programs and Services for Children with Special Needs* (NC Department of Public Instruction, 1996).

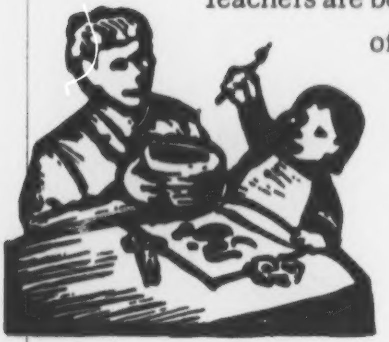
For kindergarten and older children, Section 1501 of the *North Carolina Procedures Governing Programs and Services for Children with Special Needs* (NC Department of Public Instruction, 1996) states that "children with special needs," includes without limitation, all children who, because of permanent or temporary mental, physical or emotional disabilities, need special education, are unable to have all their educational needs met in a regular class without special education or related services, or are unable to be



adequately educated in the public schools. It includes those who are academically gifted, autistic, behaviorally-emotionally handicapped, deaf-blind, hearing impaired, mentally handicapped, multihandicapped, orthopedically impaired, other health impaired, pregnant, specific learning disabled, speech-language impaired, traumatic brain injured and visually impaired. The term "preschool children with disabilities" includes, without limitation, all 3 and 4 year-old children and those 5-year-old children who are ineligible for kindergarten and who because of permanent or temporary cognitive, communication, social/ emotional and/or adaptive disabilities are unable to have all of their developmental needs met in a natural environment without special education and related services. It includes preschool children who are delayed/atypical or those who are autistic, deaf-blind, hearing impaired, other health impaired, orthopedically impaired, speech-language impaired, visually impaired, or traumatic brain-injured. Preschool children with disabilities become eligible for services upon reaching their third birthday.

Planning or Modifying for the Classroom

Teachers are both the primary assessors and the primary consumers of assessment information. They "cannot decide what, how, and when to teach without knowing what is happening with children" (Hills, 1992, p. 46). Knowledge of how children grow and develop guides teachers as they assess young children's learning.



Children with Special Needs

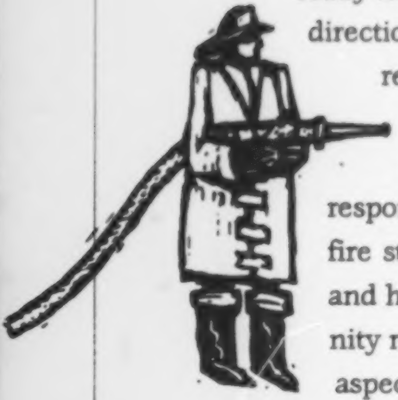
The relationship between assessment and curriculum planning is perhaps most explicit when a child qualifies for special education or related services. In this case, a multidisciplinary team, including the teacher and the child's parent or guardian, writes an individualized education plan (IEP). This plan establishes learning expectations for the child and the program modifications or interventions required to implement it. The reciprocal relationship between assessment and curriculum planning continues as the IEP becomes the basis for assessing the child's learning and development. The IEP for each child must include the following seven components.

1. a statement of the child's present levels of educational performance
2. a statement of annual goals
3. a statement of short-term instructional objectives
4. a statement of special education and related services to be provided to the child
5. a description of the extent to which the child will participate in regular education programs or natural preschool environments and a description of the program to be provided
6. the projected dates for initiation of services and the anticipated duration of services
7. objective criteria, evaluation procedures, and a schedule for determining, on at least an annual basis, whether the short-term instructional objectives are being achieved

Assessment information influences curriculum for other children as well. If you discover that a kindergarten child is performing below expectations in writing, for example, you can use what you know about that child's particular interests to create opportunities that encourage him to copy words or write her own—perhaps to make signs for the block or dramatic play area. As noted earlier, a child who has difficulty listening attentively to stories in large group situations, might benefit from occasional opportunities to sit on someone's lap for a private story time. Information you collect as you observe children can help you make adjustments to fit your program to the children in your class.

Connecting Assessment and Planning

One exciting application of assessment information gleaned from documentation happens when teachers listen carefully to children to discover their interests and levels of understanding and then make tentative plans for activities that pursue those interests. They remain ready to alter the plans if the children's interests take them in other directions. *Emergent* and *negotiated* curriculum are terms used to refer to planning from children's interests. After a fire in the neighborhood, you might notice stories and pictures about firefighters cropping up in kindergarten journals. You could respond to this by providing books and planning a field trip to the fire station. You can plan for children to interview firefighters and help them acquire social studies knowledge about community roles. The children might be more intrigued by mechanical aspects of the fire truck, however, or the firefighter's breathing



apparatus. If you are observing and documenting children's activities and using this information for planning, you can encourage this new direction by helping the children observe these things more closely, perhaps suggesting ways they can record their observations, and providing opportunities back in the classroom for them to represent their discoveries in their artwork and block constructions. As a flexible teacher, you can combine a social studies lesson with a scientific exploration of the physical world. This enhances children's dispositions of curiosity and eagerness to learn. Systematic observation, documentation, and reflection enable you to follow children's interests and offer meaningful learning.

Sharing Information

Although teachers are the primary consumers of assessment information, there are at least four other audiences with an interest in that information: the children themselves, parents or other family members, other professionals, and community decision makers. Each audience needs information in a form that best meets its particular needs.

Portfolios

Children take interest in their work and value their learning when they see the interest it holds for important people in their lives. When children select work for their portfolios themselves, it helps them to see how their ideas and work have changed over time. Motivation to learn increases when children are aware of their progress toward specific goals. In addition to asking children to review and comment on their work, involve them in the evaluation process by meeting with them individually and by including them in parent conferences. Of course, children are more likely to benefit when assessment emphasizes their strengths and clearly states plans for supporting their growth in all areas including these areas of concern.

Portfolio development is one way to collect and share information about learning and development with children and families. Children who are involved in evaluating their own work are more likely to be able to tell their families about it, thereby helping you communicate meaningful information. Families want to know *what* their children are doing in school. They may be interested in knowing *why*, and they almost certainly want to know *how well* their children are doing. Portfolios, with examples of work and written explanations of why examples were selected, help answer the first two questions. A conference, in which you discuss the child's performance and progress, is probably the most effective way of handling the *how well* question. You also need to put your comments in writing, both for families who cannot come to conferences and for others to have a record of what was discussed.

Written Reports

A written report summarizes your evaluation. It provides specific examples that focus on strengths and provides plans, including strategies, to address any concerns. Use language that reflects the program goals and objectives. Consider these examples:

Example 1

Ted's interest in language and reading can be seen by his eagerness to listen to stories read aloud and his willingness to draw pictures in his journal. He is not yet writing words to accompany his pictures and seems reluctant to speak up during class discussions. In the next few months, I will focus attention on and support his growth in these areas.

Example 2

Pat's free exploration of manipulatives reflects her enjoyment of math as well as good readiness skills. She recognizes, extends, and creates patterns; understands the concept of number and quantity (0-10); instantly recognizes the number of dots on a die (1-6); and has a beginning sense of geometry, measurement, graphing, and math vocabulary. A goal is to develop her number operation in adding two quantities (Dichtelmiller et al., 1994, p. 97).

Notice that each of these statements accentuates what the child can do, and neither statement places unrealistic burdens on parents to "do something" about their child's performance. Imagine what would happen if the first example included a comment like "Matt needs to

Lynette's first day of school

Subjective Version	Objective Version
This is Lynette's first day at school. She is a cute little girl, but she has a lot to learn about sharing. She is very immature.	This is Lynette's first day at school.
Today she played happily on the slide.	Lynette ran to the slide board, climbed the ladder, sat down, shoved off, and slid down. She was smiling.
Two other children wanted to slide also.	Two other children climbed up and slid down the slide also.
Lynette was being selfish. She didn't want anyone else to slide.	Lynette climbed up and this time sat firmly at the top of the slide. She put both arms straight out to the sides, at shoulder height as other children approached.
The other children got mad at Lynette, but instead of sharing she got mad back at them and tried being mean.	After she sat there about 30 seconds, the other children began to push her, and she went down the slide. Lynette was frowning and her mouth was pushed way out.
She yelled at them. She didn't care what the other children wanted, but told them off.	She yelled, "Stop it! Stop it! You can't slide on my slide board—this is my slide board."
The other children were smart and ignored her.	The other children kept climbing up and sliding down.
Whatever Lynette did, she couldn't stop the other children from sliding, but she kept trying to hog the slide board, yelling orders to them and being generally obnoxious.	Lynette stood by the low part of the slide board and as the children got near the bottom she gave each one a hard push, knocking them down. She screamed, "This is my slide board! Get off! Get off!"

Lynette's first day of school (cont.)

Subjective Version	***Objective Version***
I could see Lynette was angry and upset, but I had to laugh at her getting so worked up and thinking that I'd defend her selfishness.	Lynette's fists were clenched and she had tears in her eyes. She looked up at me and said, "This is my slide board. They won't get off!"
Lynette was certainly bothering the other children.	The other children went right on sliding.
I started to talk to Lynette about what she was doing	I took Lynette's hand and I said, "OK, Lynette, let's have a talk about this." I took her over to the doll corner.
I tried to reason with Lynette. I told her not to be selfish, and the other children could use the toys, too.	I told Lynette she could have any doll or toy she liked in the whole school, even the slide board, if she let other children play, too.
After a few minutes she seemed to understand.	Lynette looked at me directly in the face as I was talking, and began to nod her head slowly.
She was glad I let her back on the slide board.	She began to smile, then skipped off back to the slide board.
She learned not to be selfish any more.	She stood patiently at the foot of the ladder until there was a place for her to climb up; then she climbed up and slid right down.

Ditchtelmiller, M., Jablon, J., Dorfman, A.B., Marsden, D. B., & Meisels, J. J. (1994). *Training materials: The work sampling system.* Ann Arbor, MI: Rebus Planning Associates, Inc.

speak up more in class discussions." A well-intentioned parent might pressure Matt to speak up more, with the possible result that he would feel even more uncomfortable in school. Even without overt pressure from his parents, Matt might begin to feel their silent worry, with further erosion of his confidence.

Just as you make observation notes as objective as possible, avoid judgmental or opinionated language in reports to families. Consider the two versions of Lynette's first day of school which demonstrate how important it is to observe before you draw conclusions.

Conferences

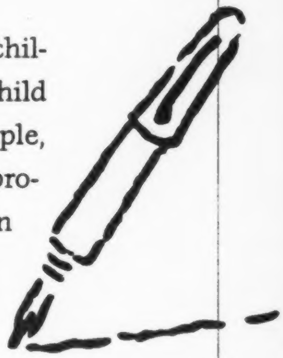
Conferences are a good way to share information with parents, other teachers, and appropriate support staff. To make the most of the conference setting, prepare your conversation so that you will present your information objectively, positively, and clearly. Avoid jargon. Be open for questions on points you need to clarify as well as for information that the other conferees may share with you. A conference should be a conversation among those people most concerned about the child, rather than a presentation by the teacher.

Respect Language

The emphasis on positive, respectful language does not mean, however, that you should keep genuine concerns from families or surprise them with negative year-end evaluations. If a child is not developing as expected, families need to know. The key is to give them information in a non-judgmental way, to help them see it within the context of things the child does well, and to show them the ways that you intend to help the child improve. The conference is a good opportunity to form a partnership with parents for the success of the child. For children with identified special needs, federal law mandates that schools inform parents or guardians about decisions that affect their children's educational programs.

Communicating with Other Professionals

From time to time, you may need to share your evaluations of children's performance with other professionals. When you refer a child for evaluation of special conditions or learning needs, for example, your observations and records can contribute to the evaluation process if they are objective and carefully documented. Well-written summary reports can be passed on to the child's next teacher and help provide a head start for that teacher's curriculum planning.



Program Evaluation

Administrators and other members of your community will be more interested in aggregate information about the extent to which all the children in your classroom are meeting the goals and objectives established within your school district. It is important to remember that when large numbers of children fall short of goals and objectives, it could mean that you need to try new instructional strategies, but it could also mean that the established goals and objectives are not realistic for young children. Keeping detailed, accurate records of what the children in your classroom can do and how they develop over time can help you determine the effectiveness of your program.

Evaluation Goals

As you summarize and quantify the results of performance-based assessments to show children's progress, be sure to—

- Look at attaining daily objectives as well as long term goals.
- Evaluate and report the quality of services to students with special needs.
- Assess and report the quality of communication with families.
- Assess and report the use of community resources.
- Assess and report the quality of the program environment.
- Assess and report the quality of staff performance.
- Assess and report opportunities to maintain and update professional knowledge and skills.
- Include recommendations to maintain or change instructional goals or objectives based on children's needs.
- Identify effective and ineffective instructional procedures.
- Combine information from multiple sources to present a comprehensive assessment of child and program accomplishments.
- Share program evaluation results among stakeholders.
- Plan improvements in all program components.

Summary

Whether you are a beginning or an experienced teacher, it may help if you keep the following points in mind:

- You do not have to reinvent the wheel. Well-planned, comprehensive assessment systems are commercially available. Examples from the *Work Sampling System* and High/Scope's *Child Observation Record* have been presented throughout this chapter. Curriculum materials you are currently using may have forms and suggestions to get you started.
- Whether you elect to use a commercially-published system or create your own, start slowly. Set realistic goals for yourself and gradually expand them each semester. You might decide to collect only examples of math and literacy work for portfolios this year. Once you feel comfortable with that, add science and social studies items the following year. Or, you might decide to limit yourself to two collections and review cycles during the first year to allow time to learn and refine your approach.
- Be sure the process you select fits with the system your school system is using. This may require that you schedule an appointment before the school year begins to explain your proposed system and discuss your plans for implementing it.
- Be sure parents and decision makers know what you are doing in advance. Do not surprise people with a portfolio and narrative report if this is different than the report cards kindergartners have been bringing home for the last several years. Some administrators establish parent-teacher committees to schedule meetings to explain new assessment techniques. They might

designate a particular person in the school to serve as resident expert and answer questions that arise later. Whatever your system chooses, you can be proactive by scheduling a parent meeting early in the year to preview the new system.

- Give yourself permission to make mistakes the first few times you try something. You will learn from your experience if you don't give up too quickly. Even if you have to make changes, you will learn from these changes.

Teachers need training and resources to implement fair and accurate assessment that benefits children. School systems have an commitment to enable teachers to successfully fulfill their responsibilities in the assessment process. Teachers have ethical obligations to maintain and enhance their professional knowledge and skills—including assessment skills. School systems help by

- fostering collaboration among teachers and other professionals.
- providing teachers information on different assessment procedures.
- providing teachers information on community resources; and
- establish reasonable timelines for assessment processes.

This chapter overviews assessment of individual children, including those with special needs. It provides guidance for evaluating children's performance on the basis of that assessment, for using assessment information to plan curriculum, and for communicating results to parents and other decision makers. Effective assessment is part of an ongoing cycle. It helps teachers make preliminary plans for children's learning, determine how well those plans are working, and continually refine those plans. Effective assessment is at the heart of effective teaching.

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4. How Do I Assess the Children's Progress?

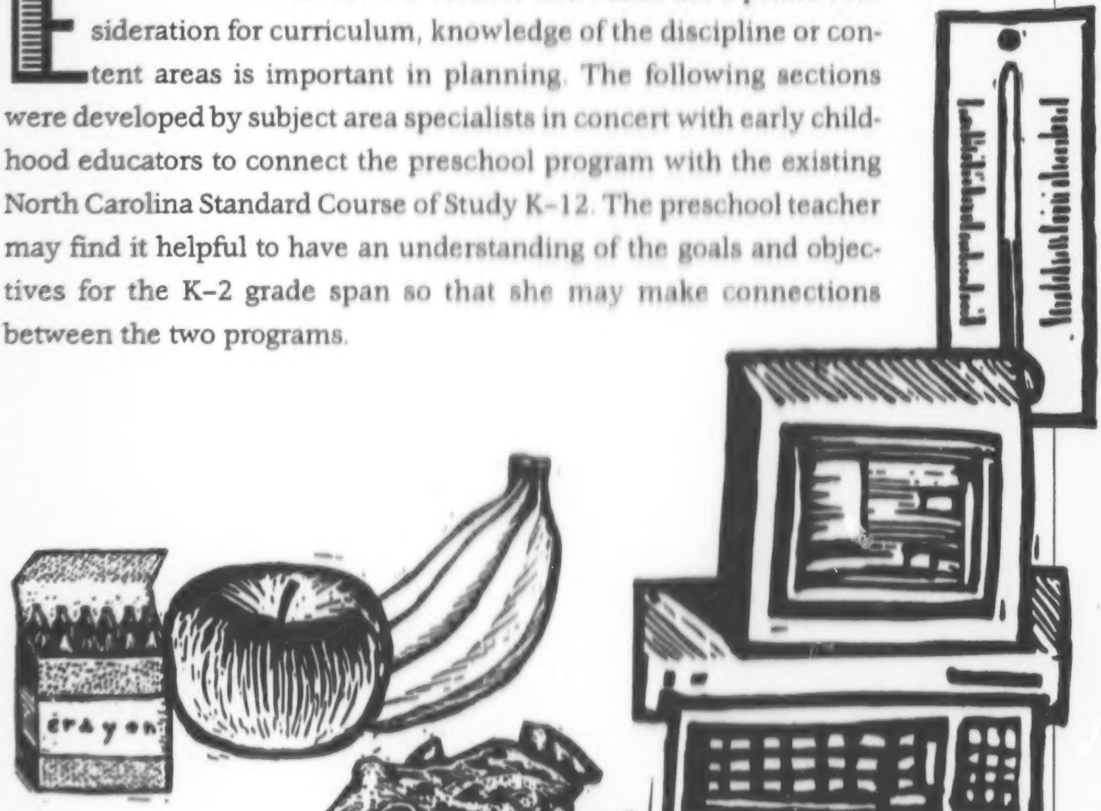
Chapter Highlights

How Do I Assess the Children's Progress?

- **Conditions for Effective Assessment**
- **Plans**
- **Techniques**
  - Observation
  - Conferences
  - Anecdotal Records
  - Checklists
  - Technology
- **Organizing Information**
  - Routines
  - Using Portfolios
- **Drawing Conclusions**
- **Planning or Modifying the Classroom**
  - Children with Special Needs
  - Connecting Assessment and Planning
- **Sharing Information**
  - Portfolios
  - Written Reports
  - Conferences
  - Respectful Language
  - Communicating with Other Professionals
  - Program Evaluation
  - Evaluation Goals
- **Summary**
- **References**

Disciplines

EVEN THOUGH CHILDREN'S INTERESTS AND NEEDS are a prime consideration for curriculum, knowledge of the discipline or content areas is important in planning. The following sections were developed by subject area specialists in concert with early childhood educators to connect the preschool program with the existing North Carolina Standard Course of Study K–12. The preschool teacher may find it helpful to have an understanding of the goals and objectives for the K–2 grade span so that she may make connections between the two programs.



The following content areas are addressed: English language arts, mathematics, arts, healthful living, science, and social studies. Each area has nine sections, except English language arts and math which have an additional section on indicators of growth and achievement (benchmarks).

1. An overview of the content area
2. Foundations for learning
3. Questions to promote thinking
4. Implications for teaching
5. Establishing the environment
6. Recommended materials
7. Standards
8. North Carolina Standard Course of Study
9. Resources

reading, writing, listening, speaking

- Define and describe the world through spoken and written language.
- Use language for immediate, practical purposes.
- Develop spoken and written language through interactions with others.
- Use language to understand and to be understood.
- Use spoken and written language to answer questions, solve problems, communicate ideas, and access information.

Foundations for Learning in Language Arts

Reading, writing, speaking, and listening are tools for communication. As adults, we use them to express ourselves. Children use them for the same purposes even though some of their attempts may look very little like ours. The opportunities offered in the environment, both at home and at school, to experience language greatly enhance the development of communication skills as children mature and learn. Language arts programs need the following components.

Questions to Promote Thinking

- How is [name of character in story] like you?
- What happened in the story?
- Has anything like that ever happened to you?
- What will you add to the list of things we will buy when we go to the store?
- What will you draw in a picture of our trip to the store?
- What can you tell us about your block structure?
- What will you write to your parents?
- Do you want to add anything to your story?

Think about the language arts learning objectives addressed by these questions. What are some other language arts questions you use?

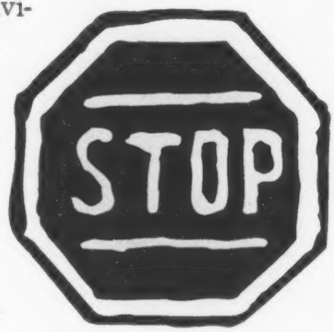
Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing

The more children are exposed to language, the more they recognize written language and learn to express themselves in all forms of language. Children need experiences with oral language to communicate, read and write.

Functions of Language

Children's earliest use of language is to communicate basic needs. Gradually, other functions of language develop, including ways to direct, report, understand, solve problems, maintain relationships, and express imagination. Classroom programs that provide opportunities to encourage these functions and uses support learning in language arts.

Print Rich Environment



Early childhood teachers must provide a print rich environment including a wide variety of written materials: books, magazines, newspapers, cereal boxes, menus—just about anything that contains everyday written words. Moreover, the environment must allow children to feel free to talk and share. The routines of the day should provide a structure for many formal and informal opportunities to use both print and spoken language.

Connecting Spoken and Written Language

Teachers help children make the connection between oral and written language by providing materials such as different kinds of paper, various writing instruments, and all kinds of books. Models of the alphabet, letters, poems, posters, charts, schedules, and examples of things others have written further enrich learning experiences.

Feedback and Approximations

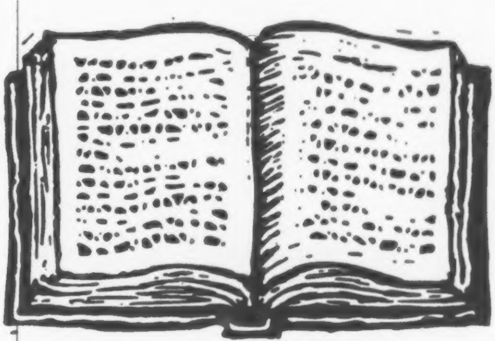
Children learn to read and write by watching, experimenting, and getting feedback on their attempts to read and write. Teachers and other adults demonstrate the importance of reading by reading to children and encouraging them to retell stories and events. Teachers model reading and writing and conduct storytelling in daily classroom activities. They work with children to provide coaching and models as they create stories, chants, and rhymes, and learn words and ways to say and record their thoughts. Audio tapes and computer activities may enhance learning as children try new language activities.

Individual and Direct Instruction

Teachers provide many kinds of support including direct instruction. By knowing children's individual needs, teachers provide appropriate, direct instruction to support learning in language arts.

Concepts about Print

As children display interest in writing and awareness that print carries a message, they develop an understanding that print follows a direction and format (left to right, top to bottom). Children begin by scribbling. Then they draw pictures and begin labeling them. Children use letters they know to represent writing and identify letters, words, and sentences and use correct terminology to refer to them. Children become familiar with handling books and talking about the conventions of print.



Alphabet Knowledge

Knowledge of the alphabet is a necessary, though not sufficient condition for learning to read. Children need to know individual letters by shape and name, and they need to know about letter sounds. They also need to be able to identify capital and lower case letters and know they are different forms of the same letter.

Sound/Letter Relationships

Children learn the relationships between letters and sounds as they experience written and spoken language. They need phonemic awareness—the ability to segment the speech sounds and words. Children represent a whole word with one, two, or three letters which are mainly consonants and associate a letter or combination of letters of the alphabet with speech sounds whenever they occur in a word. It is important for children to understand the nature of the relationship between sounds and letters is variable. That is, a letter can stand for more than one sound, a sound can be represented by more than one letter, and letters can combine to form a single sound.

Applying Sound/Letter Relationships (Spelling)

As they experiment with writing, children show a willingness to attempt spelling even though it may not be conventional. Encourage them to use temporary (invented) spelling. At the same time, teach appropriate phonics and correct spelling so that using temporary spelling and teaching spelling occur together. To extend the learning process, help children develop conventional spelling as they explore word structures, plurals, tenses, letter clusters, patterns, and word families. To facilitate the reading and writing processes, help children to acquire and use a core of known words. By doing so, they acquire good spelling habits.

Expectations and Standards

All children expect to learn to read and write and can be taught to do so. Teachers need to provide many strategic opportunities and experiences to accommodate many learning styles. Children's language development follows a continuum. You will find examples of this continuum in the Appendix as *Age Appropriate Behaviors*. This continuum should be interpreted with both age and individual appropriateness in mind.

Implications for Teaching

How can you

- give children opportunities for labeling where things go, their own belongings, captions for drawings?
- provide opportunities for writing and receiving messages?
- use conversations about children's thoughts and writing to talk about letters and sounds?
- provide experiences with letters—including playing with letters, writing letters, making letters, and looking for letters?
- help children learn letter/sound relationships in informal ways?
- use songs and word plays throughout the day?
- encourage children to write in their own way using stories, notes, lists, labels, journals, logs?
- provide accessible folders, portfolios, or other places for children to store their writing?
- stock all centers with reading and writing materials?
- furnish authentic printed materials on different levels and topics for children to read?
- provide models of writing for children?
- make story telling and read-alouds a regular part of every day's activities?

Establishing a language arts environment

Remember to:

- ✓ establish centers and work areas that encourage reading and writing. Include books, puppets, dramatic play areas, writing/publishing, dress up, housekeeping, transportation, and science centers.
- ✓ post a class roster with children's names and pictures.
- ✓ display books so that covers and titles show.
- ✓ supply real written materials such as menus, recipes, boxes, labels, calendars, catalogues, and telephones books for all centers.
- ✓ provide materials such as blocks, "junk," and scraps of fabric that stimulate curiosity, thinking, and questioning because there are many ways to use them.
- ✓ provide a soft comfortable area where children can read and write. Furnishings may include bean bag chairs, a rug, a bathtub with lots of pillows, or a seat from an old car.
- ✓ establish an area large enough for group story time. This area may overlap reading and writing areas.
- ✓ label all storage areas clearly and teach children to recognize the labels. Labels may be words, pictures, silhouettes or a combination of these.
- ✓ provide language opportunities for children using assistive technology.
- ✓ ensure access to computers with appropriate software for all children.
- ✓ rotate books and other print materials regularly.
- ✓ set up engaging reading and writing nooks in quiet areas in the room with invitations to read and write.

Language arts materials

☐ Flannel board and flannel board stories, letters, & flannel pieces
☐ Chart stand
☐ Metal board with magnetic letters & shapes
☐ Big book easel
☐ Tape player & tapes
☐ Papers (construction paper, newsprint, tissue paper, note, & scratch pads)
☐ Blank books
☐ Stationary & envelopes
☐ Index cards & "stickies"
☐ Writing & drawing tools (paper, crayons, pencils, colored pencils, pens, felt pens, & chalk)
☐ Shapes for tracing
☐ Typewriter
☐ Computer & printer
☐ Adding machine tape
☐ Personal & large chalk boards
☐ Picture dictionaries
☐ Stamps & ink pads
☐ Stapler & staples
☐ Hole punch
☐ Scotch tape
☐ Glue & paste
☐ Menus
☐ Calendars
☐ Signs & labels
☐ Large print books
☐ Braille books
☐ Alphabet books & cards
☐ Homemade & class books
☐ Predictable and/or patterned books
☐ Dictionaries—commercial & homemade
☐ Record player
☐ Cassette recorder
☐ Records & tapes (classical, traditional, vocal, stories, & poetry)
☐ Catalogues
☐ Magazines
☐ Display unit for books
☐ Rack for big books
☐ Wall charts & posters
☐ Word wall
☐ Carpet, cushions, couch, chairs, rocking chair
☐ Tables & other flat work surfaces
☐ Shelves where all children can reach & return supplies
☐ Books representing a variety of cultures, languages, ethnic groups, and geographic regions

Standards for the English Language Arts

1. Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.

2. Students read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions (e.g., philosophical, ethical, aesthetic) of human experience.

3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).

4. Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.

5. Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.

6. Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions, (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts.

Standards (cont.)

7. Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and non-print texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.

8. Students use a variety of technological and informational resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

9. Students develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in language use, patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles.

10. Students whose first language is not English make use of their first language to develop competency in the English language arts and to develop understanding of content across the curriculum.

11. Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.

12. Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information). (International Reading Association & National Council of Teachers of English, 1996)

English Language Arts
North Carolina Standard Course of Study

K–2 Competency Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: The learner will use strategies and processes that enhance control of communication skills development.

1.1 Apply PREPARATION strategies to comprehend or convey experiences and information.

1.2 Apply ENGAGEMENT strategies to comprehend or convey experiences and information.

1.3 Apply RESPONSE strategies to comprehend and convey experiences or information.

Goal 2: The learner will use language for acquisition, interpretation, and application of information.

2.1. Identify, collect, or select information and ideas.

2.2. Analyze, synthesize, organize information and discover related ideas, concepts, or generalizations.

2.3. Apply, extend, and expand on information, and concepts.

Goal 3: The learner will use language for critical analysis and evaluation.

3.1 Assess the validity and accuracy of information and ideas.

3.2 Determine the value of information and ideas.

3.3 Develop criteria and evaluate the quality, relevance, and importance of the information and ideas.

Goal 4: The learner will use language for aesthetic and personal response.

- **4.1** Respond to personal situations and events in selections and to personal situations and events.
- **4.2** Respond to the personal, social, cultural, and historical significance of selections or personal experiences.
- **4.3** Respond critically and creatively to selections or personal experiences.

Benchmarks

Benchmarks are points of evaluation. The kindergarten, first grade, and second grade benchmarks indicate the expected level of achievement at the end of each year. The context for these reading and writing benchmarks can be found in the reading strand of the *English Language Arts Standard Course of Study,* which defines reading as a process, not a discrete set of skills

KINDERGARTEN READING AND WRITING BENCHMARKS

Book and Print Awareness

- Knows parts of books and functions of each part.
- Demonstrates directionality and voice-print match by following print word for word when listening to familiar text read aloud.
- Demonstrates understanding of letters, words, and story.

Phonemic Awareness and Alphabetic Principle

- Demonstrates understanding that spoken language is a sequence of identifiable speech sounds.
- Demonstrates understanding that the sequence of letters in the written word represents the sequence of sounds in the spoken word.

- Demonstrates understanding of the sounds of the letters and understanding that words begin and end alike (onsets and rimes).

Decoding and Word Recognition

- Recognizes and names upper and lower case letters of the alphabet.
- Recognizes some words by sight including a few common words, own name, and environmental print such as signs, labels, and trademarks.
- Recognizes most beginning consonant letter-sound associations with one-syllable words.

Spelling and Writing

- Represents spoken language with temporary and/or conventional spelling.
- Demonstrates understanding of literary language (e.g., "once upon a time," variety of sentence patterns).
- Writes most letters of the alphabet.
- Writes and/or participates in writing behaviors.

Language, Comprehension, and Response to Text

- Uses new vocabulary and language in own speech.
- Understands and follows oral/graphic directions.
- Demonstrates sense of story (e.g., beginning, middle, end, characters, details).
- Connects information and events in text to experience.
- Demonstrates familiarity with a variety of modes, books, and selections.
- Reads or begins to read.

FIRST GRADE READING AND WRITING BENCHMARKS

Phonemic Awareness

- Can blend the phonemes of one-syllable words.
- Can segment the phonemes of one-syllable words.
- Can count the syllables in a word.
- Can change beginning, middle, and ending sound to produce new words.

Decoding and Word Recognition

- Uses phonics knowledge of sound-letter relationships to decode regular one-syllable words when reading words and text.
- Can change beginning, middle, and ending sound to produce new words.
- Recognizes many high frequency and/or common irregularly spelled words in text (e.g., *have, said, where, two*).
- Reads aloud with fluency and comprehension any text that is appropriately designed for the first half of grade one.
- Uses pronunciation, sentence meaning, story meaning, and syntax to confirm accurate decoding or to self-correct errors.

Spelling and Writing

- Writes all upper and lower case letters of alphabet
- Uses phonics knowledge and basic patterns (e.g., *an, ee, ake*) to spell correctly three- and four-letter words.
- Applies phonics to write independently using temporary and/or conventional spelling.
- Uses basic punctuation and basic capitalization.
- Composes a variety of products (e.g., stories, journal entries, letters).

Language, Comprehension, and Response to Text

- Reads and comprehends both narrative and expository text appropriate for grade-one.
- Self-monitors in decoding, comprehending, and composing text by using one or two strategies.
- Elaborates on how information and events connect to life experiences.
- Reads and understands simple written instructions.
- Predicts and explains what will happen next in stories.
- Discusses and explains responses to *how, why*, and *what-if* questions in sharing narrative and expository texts.
- Retells new information in own words.
- Understands the concept of a sentence.
- Responds and elaborates in answering *what? when? where? how?* questions.
- Uses new vocabulary and language in both speech and writing.
- Demonstrates familiarity with a variety of types of text (e.g., storybooks, poems, newspapers, telephone books, and everyday print such as signs, notices, labels).

SECOND GRADE READING AND WRITING BENCHMARKS

Decoding & Word Recognition

- Uses phonics knowledge and structural analysis (e.g., knowledge of syllables, suffixes, prefixes, root words) to decode regular multi-syllable words when reading text.
- Accurately reads most high frequency and many irregularly spelled words in text.
- Reads aloud with fluency and comprehension any text appropriate for the first half of grade two.

Spelling and Writing

- Correctly spells, using previously studied words and spelling patterns in one's own writing.
- Represents with appropriate letters all the sounds of a word when writing.
- Begins to use formal language and/or literary language in place of oral language patterns, as appropriate.
- Plans and makes judgments about what to include in written products.
- With guided discussion, revises to clarify and refine writing.
- Given help with organization, writes structured, informative presentations and narratives.
- Attends to spelling, mechanics, and format for final products in one's own writing.

Language, Comprehension & Response to Text

- Reads and comprehends both narrative and expository text that is appropriate for grade two.
- Self-monitors difficulties in decoding, comprehending, and composing text by using several strategies.
- Interprets information from diagrams, charts, and maps.
- Recalls facts and details from text.
- Reads expository materials for answers to specific questions.
- Discusses similarities and differences in events and characters across stories.
- Connects and compares information across expository selections to experience and knowledge.
- Poses possible how, why, and what-if questions to understand and/or interpret text.
- Explains and describes new concepts and information in own words.
- Understands the following parts of the sentence: subject, predicate, modifier.
- Uses text for a variety of functions, including literary, informational, and practical.

RESOURCES

Children's Books

Ackerman, K. (1992). *I know a place*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Brown, M. W. (1947). *Goodnight moon*. New York: Harper.

Cowley, J. (1986). "Mrs. Wishy-Washy." In *Story box in the classroom: Stage I*. San Diego: The Wright Group.

Cowley, J. (1987). *The teeny tiny woman*. Crystal Lake, IL: Rigby.

Fleming, V. (1993). *Be good to Eddie Lee*. New York: Philomel Books.

Fox, M. (1988). *Koala Lou*. New York: Gulliver Books-Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Fox, M. (1984). *Wilfred Gordon McDonald Partridge*. Brooklyn, NY: Kane/Miller Book Publishers.

Freeman, D. (1986). *Corduroy*. New York: Viking.

Henkes, K. (1991). *Chrysanthemum*. New York: Greenwillow Books.

Henkes, K. (1993). *Owen*. New York: Greenwillow Books.

Hopkins, L. B. (1992). *Through our eyes: Poems and pictures about growing up*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company.

Kroll, S. (1983). *Pigs in the house*. New York: Parents Magazine Press.

Lindbergh, R. (1993). *There's a cow in the road*. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers.

Martin, Jr., B. (1982). *Brown bear, brown bear*. New York: Holt.

Martin, Jr. B., & Archambault, J. (1989). *Chicka chicka boom boom.* New York: Simon and Schuster.

Minarik, E. H. (1992). *Am I beautiful?* New York: Greenwillow Books.

Weiss, N. (1989). *Where does the brown bear go?* New York: Greenwillow.

Professional Books

Anthony, R. J., Johnson, T. D., Mickelson, N. I., & Preece, A. (1991). *Evaluating literacy: A perspective for change.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books.

Bialostok, S. (1992). *Raising readers: Helping your child to literacy.* Winnipeg, MB, Canada: Peguis Publishers Limited.

Butler, A., & Turbil, J. (1984). *Towards a reading-writing classroom.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books.

Butler, D., & Clay, M. (1995). *Reading begins at home—preparing children for reading before they go to school* (8TH edition). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books.

Fisher, B. (1995). *Thinking and learning together: Curriculum and community in a primary classroom.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books.

Gentry, J. R. (1997). *My kid can't spell.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books.

Gentry, J. R., & Gillet, J. W. (1993). *Teaching kids to spell.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books.

Goodman, Y. M. (1984). "The development of initial literacy." In H. Goelman & A. Oberg (Eds.), *Awakening to literacy.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books.

Goodman, Y. M., (1996). *Notes from a kid watcher.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books.

Goodman, Y. M. (1986). "Children coming to know literacy." In W. Teale & E. Sulzby (Eds.), *Emergent literacy: Writing and reading.* Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Heath, S. B. (1982). "What no bedtime story means: Narrative skills at home and school." *Language in society, 11* (1), pp. 49-76.

Holdaway, D. (1979). *The foundations of literacy.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books.

Katz, L. G., & Chard, S. J. (1989). *Engaging children's minds: The project approach.* Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Routman, R. (1996). *Literacy at the crossroads: Crucial talk about reading, writing, and other teaching dilemmas.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books.

Shockley, B., Michalove, B., & Allen, J. (1995). *Engaging families: Connecting home and school literacy communities.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books.

Strickland, D., & Morrow, L. M. (Eds.). (1989). *Emerging literacy: Young children learn to read and write.* Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Trelease, J. (1989). *The new read-aloud handbook.* New York: Penguin.

Voss, M. (1996). *Hidden literacies: Children learning at home and at school.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books.

Mathematics

exploring the world with numbers

- Makes sense of and describes the world through numbers, time, size, and shape.
- Includes sorting and classifying, using patterns, solving problems, and resorting.
- Makes comparisons and uses measurements, constructs concepts of geometry, and develops spatial sense.
- Uses numbers and mathematical operations to answer questions, solve problems, and communicate ideas.

Foundations for Learning Mathematics

Children learn mathematics as they observe and experience their world. Learning is enhanced when children have a variety of experiences and opportunities to discuss their experiences with adults and other children. As children mature and have day-to-day experiences, they develop concepts about the way things work. They recognize things that are alike and different. They compare and sort things. They begin to make predictions. They understand functions and see patterns.

Learning mathematical concepts and skills is incredibly complex. Children learn different concepts at different rates, and the concepts overlap each other. There is, however, a general sequence that children follow as they acquire increasingly complex mathematical concepts and skills.

Alike and Different

Children are keen observers of their world. Adults contribute to children's learning when they help children interpret their observations by talking about them. Through a rich variety of multi-sensory experiences and discussions, adults can help children develop mathematical language. Discussing attributes such as size, shape, color, speed, and function leads to the concept of alike and different.

Sorting

Sorting is an extension of the concept of alike and different. Children begin to observe and group similar things. They start by naming one way that things are alike. From this concept, children begin recognizing broad classifications like animals, foods, vehicles. Children need experiences sorting real things in their environments and opportunities to discuss their insights.

Patterning

As children observe and sort, they begin to recognize patterns. They see patterns in the human face—eyes, nose, mouth—and in the environment. They experience patterns in days and seasons.

Questions to Promote Thinking

- **Do we have enough napkins?**
- **How far is it to the front of the building?**
- **Which socks can you match to make pairs?**
- **How can we figure out what is the favorite food in our class?**
- **Which is bigger/smaller?**
- **What comes next?**

Think about the mathematical learning objectives addressed by these questions. What are some other mathematical questions you use?

Seriation

Seriation is the sequencing of things according to a single attribute. Young children often make comparisons: mine is bigger than yours, she has more than I, I can't reach because I'm not big enough. These comparisons lead to seriation. Sequencing by size, quantity, volume, or other attributes plays an important role in developing the concepts of number and measure.

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Concept of Number

Children learn the number words before they make the connection between a number word and a group of objects. Again, a rich variety of experiences and opportunities to discuss observations helps children internalize the concept of number. By the age of six or seven, most children begin to understand the relationship between number words and their associated values.

Non-Standard Measuring

Children need a variety of opportunities to understand length, weight, capacity or volume, money, time, temperature, and area. Help them experience all of these types of measurement in their day-to-day activities. Adults can foster children's understanding by providing opportunities to discuss, predict, compare, and explain measurements.

Spatial Relationships

As children sort, discover patterns, compare, develop number concepts, and measure, they are developing the concept of space and an understanding of spatial relationships. They need opportunities to take things apart and put them together, to shape and place objects, to judge distances, and to explore their physical relationships to other objects in a space.

Implications for Teaching Mathematics

How can you

- create an environment that is mathematically interesting and challenging?
- affirm children's use of mathematical language by affirming their ideas and listening to understand their thinking?
- clearly communicate learning expectations and consistently tell students how they are doing in terms of the learning expectations?
- structure the classroom to provide problem solving opportunities and encourage creative approaches to problem solving?
- give guidance in safe and appropriate use of materials?
- balance learning opportunities so there is a variety of purposeful directed and non-directed learning activities?
- follow up on children's interests and provide time for child-initiated activities as well as teacher-planned activities?
- incorporate individual, small group, and whole group learning experiences into the schedule?
- encourage children to communicate their ideas and discuss mathematical problems, applications, and solutions?

Establishing a Mathematical Environment

Remember to

- ✔ use indoor and outdoor settings for mathematical learning experiences.
- ✔ offer a variety of age-appropriate toys and books.
- ✔ include centers that encourage mathematical explorations—blocks, sand and water, puzzles, science, art, dramatic play, math games, and manipulatives.
- ✔ label storage places clearly so that children can easily select and put away materials.
- ✔ provide a variety of print materials that relate to numbers, shapes, patterns, time, and other math concepts—counting books, instructions for putting things together, schedules, menus, and recipes.
- ✔ use classroom routines to reinforce awareness of time, place, number, pattern and other mathematical concepts.
- ✔ rotate materials with special attention to topics of current interest to individual children or the class.
- ✔ change materials to accommodate children's learning capacities.

Math Materials

☐ Large blocks in a variety of shapes

☐ Sand/water with containers/scoops of various sizes

☐ Balance scales

☐ Simple puzzles

☐ Collected materials—rocks, buttons, coins

☐ Duplo®, parquetry, & attribute blocks

☐ Legos®

☐ Spinners

☐ Large & small beads with laces

☐ Number & shape picture books

☐ Peg boards

☐ Nesting cups

☐ Inch & centimeter cubes

☐ Strings & yarn

☐ Caps, lids, containers, jars, & boxes

☐ Sectioned boxes & cubes, egg cartons

☐ Small toys & objects for grouping & sorting

☐ Graph paper

Curriculum Standards from the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics

Nature of Mathematical Thinking

- Problem solving
- Reasoning
- Communication using mathematical concepts
- Connections or relationships

Mathematical Content

- Number sense and numeration
- Estimation
- Concepts of whole number operations
- Whole number computation
- Fractions and decimals
- Geometry and spatial sense
- Measurement
- Statistics and probability
- Patterns and relationships

Goals for Learners

Attitudes and dispositions toward learning math

- Learning to value mathematics
- Acquiring self-confidence
- Becoming a mathematical problem solver
- Learning to communicate mathematically
- Learning to reason mathematically (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, 1989)

Mathematics
North Carolina Standard Course of Study

Kindergarten Competency Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: The learner will identify and use numbers, 0 through 10 and beyond.

1.1 Use one-to-one correspondence.
1.2 Rote count forward, backward.
1.3 Count to identify how many.
1.4 Model numbers in a variety of ways.
1.5 Identify/create sets with more/less/equal members by matching.
1.6 Recognize numerals; match sets.
1.7 Use ordinals, first through fifth.
1.8 Identify "one more than" and "one less than."
1.9 Combine sets; describe results.
1.10 Remove objects from sets; describe results.

Goal 2: The learner will explore geometric ideas

2.1 Model/use directional and positional words.
2.2 Describe likenesses/differences in figures.
2.3 Recognize basic three-dimensional and two-dimensional figures.

Goal 3: The learner will model classification, pattern, seriation

3.1 Describe likenesses and differences.
3.2 Sort by a given attribution; tell about classification.
3.3 Sort by own rule; explain rule.

3.4 Identify/describe patterns.
3.5 Copy and continue simple patterns.
3.6 Create patterns with actions/words/objects.
3.7 Order familiar events; describe.

Goal 4: The learner will explore concepts of non-standard measurement
4.1 Compare/order objects by direct comparison.
4.2 Use appropriate comparative/measurement vocabulary.
4.3 Explore measurement of length, weight, and capacity.
4.4 Determine which activity takes most/least time.
4.5 Identify appropriate times of day/seasons.
4.6 Identify and tell value of pennies/nickels.
4.7 Compare hot/cold objects.

Goal 5: The learner will use mathematical thinking and reasoning to solve problems
5.1 Complete spatial visualization tasks/puzzles.
5.2 Create/solve story problems within a group.
5.3 Explain process and results in solving problems.
5.4 Within a group, create/tell about concrete graphs.
5.5 Within a group, create/tell about pictorial graphs.
5.6 Estimate appropriate quantities/measurements.

Kindergarten Mathematics Proficiencies (Benchmarks)

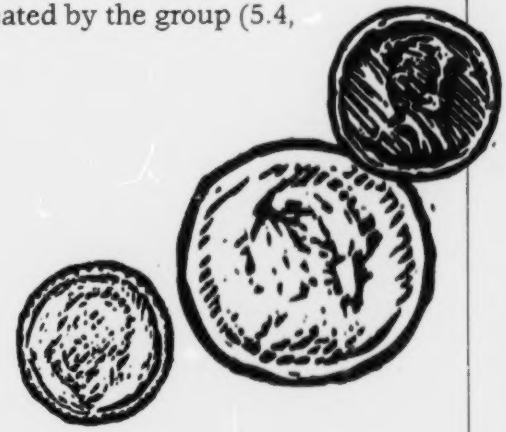
Becoming proficient in mathematics at the kindergarten level involves much more than acquiring skills and learning new vocabulary. Developmental realities demand that notions of proficiency be influenced by social, physical, affective, and cognitive considerations. Mathematics is as much a way of thinking and a disposition as it is knowledge and processes. For kindergarten students, mathematics must be doing and talking, constructing and experimenting. In determining proficient behaviors, adults must be cognizant of the vast differences in what children can do and explain in their own terms and what they are able to do with pencil and paper in abstract symbols.

Children at the kindergarten level show their understanding through specific examples rather than by making generalizations. They are able to model their understanding of beginning number concepts with the use of physical materials. They can match words to sets of objects, sets of objects to numerals, and numerals to the number names. They use counting in daily activities and are consistent in identifying sets to 10.

Students use mathematical words to describe likenesses, differences, and locations of objects. They use comparative words and can sequence 3 or 4 events or objects. They can create and copy simple patterns, sort by single attributes, and follow simple directions.

Kindergarten children can name and tell the value of pennies and a nickel. They can informally solve problems. They use spatial visualization skills in completing puzzles and other tasks such as copying figures on geoboards. As part of a group, they can create and tell about concrete and pictorial graphs. The following kindergarten benchmarks include *Teacher Handbook* references for instructional planning.

- Demonstrates an emerging understanding of the relationships of numbers (1.5, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10, 5.6)
- Uses counting for a variety of purposes (1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.7)
- Models numbers & relates symbols to numbers (1.4, 1.5, 1.6)
- Uses comparative vocabulary (2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.5, 4.7)
- Recognizes plane & solid figures (2.3)
- Begins to use classification skills (3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 4.1)
- Copies & creates patterns (3.5, 3.6)
- Sequences events & objects (3.7, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 5.3)
- Identifies & explains the value of pennies & nickel (4.5)
- Participates in a variety of problem-solving activities (5.1, 5.2, 5.3)
- Describes concrete & pictorial graphs created by the group (5.4, 5.5)
- Uses spatial visualization (5.1)



First Grade Mathematics Proficiencies (Benchmarks)

First grade students who are proficient in mathematics can recognize and create simple patterns. They give evidence of visualization skills by copying designs and completing puzzles. They can describe and model plane and solid figures and recognize them in the environment. They are aware of relationships as demonstrated in tasks of classification and seriation. They are able to describe and group objects by single attributes.

They demonstrate an understanding of measurement concepts by making simple comparisons and modeling non-standard measures accurately. These students are comfortable using positional and directional vocabulary, making and evaluating sets of money (nickels, dimes, and pennies), and using information on a calendar. They can name days of the week and months of the year in order and tell time to the nearest hour.

Students who are performing at a proficient level are able to demonstrate an understanding of our counting system and relate numbers of objects to appropriate number words. They work comfortably with numbers less than 20 and are beginning to internalize the place value system with numbers to 100. They demonstrate understanding by using a variety of counting procedures, modeling and sequencing numbers, and relating physical objects, pictures and diagrams to the symbols used for recording. They

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have learned simple number facts (addition and subtraction) and can model and record two-digit addition and subtraction with multiples to ten.

Proficient first grade students apply mathematical concepts in everyday activities. They are able to explain their ideas and write their thoughts in simple sentences though not with standard spelling or punctuation. Most of the time they are able to work in groups, sharing manipulatives and agreeing on ways to solve problems.

They employ a variety of problem-solving strategies including acting out or modeling problems, using a calculator, drawing pictures, and making lists. As a part of a small group, they are able to formulate simple questions, collect and organize data, and put that information into a bar graph. They are able to explain a variety of graphs created in their classroom.

Specific performance indicators for first grade mathematics are described in the *Standard Course of Study,* reflecting tasks which proficient first graders can do accurately most of the time. The following first grade benchmarks include *Teacher Handbook* references for instructional planning.

- Uses a variety of counting strategies (1.1, 1.4, 1.7, 1.10, 1.11, 1.13, 7.6)
- Demonstrates an understanding of the relationships of numbers (1.3, 1.4, 1.8, 1.9, 1.12)

- Reads, writes, and represents numbers in a variety of ways (1.2, 1.6, 1.13, 1.14, 1.15)
- Identifies, describes, and models, plane & solid figures (2.1, 2.2, 2.5)
- Uses visual memory & spatial visualization (2.2, 2.5, 3.5, 5.2)
- Uses comparative vocabulary (2.3, 2.4, 3.1,4.1, 4.3, 4.4)
- Describes attributes and sorts according to own rules (3.2, 3.3)
- Identifies, continues, and creates patterns (3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7)
- Uses initial measurement skills (4.2, 4.5, 4.6,4.7)
- Uses pennies, nickels & dimes to make different amounts (4.8, 4.9)
- Solves problems in a variety of ways (5.4, 5.5, 5.6)
- Uses calculators to explore number relationships and solve problems (3.5, 5.1, 7.4)
- Gives reasonable responses based on estimation (1.12, 4.1, 5.3)
- Gathers, organizes, and displays data as a group activity (6.1)
- Answers questions and makes predictions based on graphs and experiences (6.2, 6.3)
- Builds, models and explains addition & subtraction (7.1, 7.3, 7.9, 7.10, 7.11)
- Relates models, pictures, symbols, & operations (1.13, 1.14, 7.1, 7.3, 7.5, 7.9, 7.10, 7.11)
- Creates & solves number problems using addition & subtraction (1.15, 7.4, 7.2)
- Memorizes easy addition & subtraction facts (7.7, 7.8)
- Communicates understanding of mathematics orally & in writing
- Applies mathematical concepts in everyday activities

Second Grade Mathematics Proficiencies (Benchmarks)

At the second grade level students will demonstrate a greater consistency than first grade children in applying mathematical knowledge and processes. Students who are performing at a proficient level in the second grade are able to demonstrate an understanding of the base ten system by modeling, comparing, and expressing numbers in a variety of forms. They are competent in counting, reading and writing numbers to 100 and most of the time demonstrate an understanding of 3-digit numbers. They are able to relate physical objects, pictures and diagrams to symbols used for recording. They can write and use numbers in their daily lives and they can model two-digit addition and subtraction with and without renaming. Proficient students have memorized most of the addition and subtraction facts and can solve two-digit problems with models. However, they may not be consistent in solving two-digit operations without the help of manipulatives.

Second graders proficient in mathematics recognize, extend, and use patterns. They can describe similarities and differences, order and sort according to rules, and explain these processes. They employ a variety of problem-solving strategies including using a calculator, drawing pictures and diagrams, making charts and graphs, and guess and check. They solve simple problems in all strands of the curriculum. They are able to formulate simple questions; gather, collect, and organize data; and display the information. They can complete simple experiments and are able to interpret a variety of graphs that they create.

Proficient students recognize symmetry and are able to identify congruent figures. They can name basic geometric plane and solid figures and can replicate simple 3-dimensional designs. These students are beginning to internalize the basic units of measurement such as inch, centimeter, pound, and kilogram. They read thermometers, calendars, and clocks (to half-hour) and use appropriate measurement words in conversation. They can count and make sets of money with all coins, indentifying coins needed to make purchases and to give change. While second grade students can do much more than has been expected of them in the past, it is important to recognize that they do things in their own manner, not necessarily in traditional or standard ways. Specific performance indicators for second grade mathematics are described in the *Stand Course of Study,* reflecting tasks which proficient second graders can do most of the time. The following second grade benchmarks include *Teacher Handbook* references for instructional planning:

- Demonstrates an understanding of place value and the relationships of numbers (1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.8, 1.11, 6.4)
- Reads, writes, and represents numbers in a variety of ways (1.3, 1.6, 1.9, 1.10, 1.12, 4.14)
- Uses mathematical vocabulary to communicate an understanding of concepts and processes orally and in writing
- Uses a variety of counting strategies (1.1, 1.2, 1.7, 3.7)
- Identifies, describes, and creates models of plane and solid figures (2.1, 2.4, 2.5)
- Demonstrates an understanding of geometrical and measurement concepts using accurate vocabulary (2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 4.9)

- Recognizes and uses classification (1.9, 3.1, 3.2, 3.4)
- Demonstrates an increasing understanding of patterns and their uses (1.5, 1.7, 3.3, 3.4, 3.6)
- Selects and uses appropriate tools and units of standard measure (4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.6, 4.7, 4.10, 3.11)
- Makes reasonable estimates in problem situations (1.2, 4.1, 4.3, 4.13, 5.3, 7.6)
- Identifies and uses coins (4.12, 4.13, 4.15)
- Employs a variety of strategies to solve problems (4.8, 4.15, 5.1, 5.2, 5.5, 5.6, 5.7, 5.8, 7.2)
- Describes orally and in writing processes used when solving problems (5.4, 6.5, 7.1, 7.6)
- Uses spatial visualization and memory (2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 3.5, 5.2)
- Collects, organizes, and displays data (6.1, 6.3, 6.5)
- Summarizes, compares, and interprets data (6.2, 6.3, 6.5)
- Models, records, explains, and solves addition and subtraction (7.1, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.7, 7.8)
- Recalls addition and subtraction facts (7.11)
- Models multiplication and division concepts (7.9, 7.10)
- Applies mathematical concepts in everyday activities

Resources

Children's Books,

Ehlert, L. (1992). *Fish eyes: A book you can count on.* Orlando, FL: Harcourt Brace.

Mitsumasa, A. (1992). *Anno's counting book.* New York: Harper Collins Children's Books.

Slobdkina, E. (1947). *Caps for sale.* New York: Harper Collins Children's Books.

Wood, D. & Wood, A. (1987). *Piggies.* Orlando, FL: Harcourt Brace.

Professional Books

Balka, D. (1989). *Unifix mathematics activities Book: Book 2.* Peabody, MA: Didax Educational Resources.

Baratta-Lorton, M. (1995). *Mathematics their way*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishers

Blinkoe, J., & Graham, N. (1995). *Mathematical beginnings: Problem solving for young children.* Sausalito, CA: Parkwest Publications, Inc.

Burk, D., Snider, A., & Symonds, P. *(1988). Box it or bag it: Kindergarten***.** Salem, OR: The Math Learning Center.

Burk, D., Snider, A., & Symonds, P.(1993). *Math excursions: Project-based mathematics for kindergarteners.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books.

Burton, B., Coburn, T., DelGrande, J., Lindquist, M., Morrow, L., with Clements, D., Firkins, J., & Joyner, J. (1985). *Addenda series: Kindergarten book.* Reston, VA: National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM).

Burton, G. M. (1985). *Towards a good beginning.* Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishers.

Carratello, J., & Carratello, P. (1991). *Connecting math & literature.* Westminister, CA: Teacher Created Materials, Inc.

Driscoll, M., & Confrey, J. (Eds.). (1985). *Teaching mathematics: Strategies that work.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books.

Jensen, R. (Ed.). (1993). *Research ideas for the classroom: Early childhood mathematics.* Old Tappan, NJ: MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc.

Kamii, C. K., & DeClark, G. (1984). *Young children reinvent arithmetic: Implications of Piaget's theory.* New York: Teacher's College Press.

Lindquist, M. M. (1986). *Learning links.* Nashua, NH: Delta Education, Inc.

Richardson K. (1984). *Developing number concepts using unifix cubes.* Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishers.

Stenmark, J. K., Thompson, V., & Cossey, R. (1986). *Family math.* Berkley, CA: Lawrence Hall of Science.

Waite-Stupiansky, S., & Stupiansky, N. (1992). *Learning through play: Math.* Jefferson City, MO: Scholastic, Inc.

first languages of children

- Connect generations.
- Involve problem recognition, problem solving, and making decisions creatively when no prescribed answers exist.
- Develop the senses—sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch—and kinesthetics as intellectual, emotional, physical, creative, and expressive acts.
- Involve nonverbal communication.
- Make informed judgments about cultural products.

Foundations for Learning in the Arts

Children are naturally involved in the arts from a very early age. They move, sing, pantomime, create play situations and create visual expressions spontaneously. They learn through experimenting and observing their own actions and products and those of others.

As children progress in their experiences in the arts, many elements are blended. Learning takes place at different rates and is not necessarily sequential. Intuitive leaps make it possible to make new, suddenly exciting connections. Concepts and learnings may overlap. Freedom to try new ideas and explore new possibilities with a variety of media is vital to their development. As children become more comfortable with varied elements of the arts, they reach out to expand their ranges of operations. It is critical to provide challenges in a stimulating environment keeping in mind that children should never be coerced into producing a specific product.

Questions to Promote Thinking

- How are these alike or different?
- Is there a pattern in this?
- What do you think should happen next?
- What would happen if...?
- Which is larger or smaller? Louder or softer? Brighter or darker?
- How would you move if you were this animal?
- What can you tell me about your work?
- How did you feel when you heard/saw that?
- How is this (shape/sound/movement/ phrase, etc.) different from the other one?

What learning objectives in the arts are addressed by these questions? What are some other questions you can use to develop thinking in the arts?

Although arts experiences and understandings may progress at different rates and levels for each child, certain fundamental components apply to all children

Problem Recognition/ Problem Solving

In the arts, problem recognition is as important as the ability to solve problems, since children are not dealing with fixed situations where the outcomes are known in advance. Children naturally approach problems in different ways and make new and different connections easily. This provides a basis for later development of critical and creative thinking.

The Creative Process

Children are naturally creative. Helping them focus on the *process of creating* rather than on the *product* itself enables children to develop greater confidence in their capabilities. Opportunities to explore new concepts and to apply them in different ways, using varied media and materials are vital to developing children's creative abilities.

Intuition

Children are naturally intuitive and often know things they have not been taught specifically. Intuition is fundamental to creativity. It develops children's abilities to use previously learned knowledge and information in new situations. The arts nurture children's abilities to make unique connections and to use movement, speech, music and visual expressions in new as well as familiar situations. Intuition enables children to synthesize ideas and originate uses for materials and objects—a vital part of the arts experience.

Risk Taking

Creativity implies a willingness to take chances. Creative problems have no fixed answers. Experimentation and exploration are paramount, even though some efforts may appear unsuccessful. Children need a classroom climate that encourages risk-taking without penalties when the venture is not successful. Encourage classmates to be respectful, receptive, and cooperative. Developing a willingness to venture into new directions and take risks in both thinking and doing is vital to effective learning.

Relationships: Visual, Aural, Spatial

As young children explore the world, they learn about such elements as color, shape, sound, movement, speech, and the like. The arts provide opportunities for observing relationships among these elements. Children's involvement in any activity depends both on their ability to concentrate and their interest at the moment. Encourage them to experiment with new ways to relate these elements and to observe the effects of their actions. These processes are fundamental to learning in the arts.

Refining Perception

As children experience the arts, they assess what they learn and apply knowledge to new situations. They develop more refined senses and more subtle understandings of concepts. Encourage these developments by providing opportunities for more complex observation and by asking questions that stimulate thinking. As children enhance their ability to perceive details, they develop a better understanding of the world around them.

Communication

Communication is key to the arts. Children learn how to express their thoughts, ideas, and feelings through a variety of media. They practice communication by participating in the arts. During arts experiences, children learn the difference between effective and ineffective ways of conveying their ideas and feelings. By developing their ability to communicate, they become equipped to survive in an ever more demanding world and to be lifelong learners.

Implications for Teaching the Arts

How can you

- provide an environment that encourages risk-taking and develops creative processes?
- guide children in the safe and appropriate use of materials?
- encourage children to search for new connections and possibilities?
- maintain a balance between individual, small group and whole class learning activities?
- make provisions for children to initiate activities?
- provide opportunities for children to talk about their arts experiences?
- nurture confidence in making intuitive choices?
- encourage children to be tolerant of the efforts of others?
- provide assistance with problem recognition?
- stimulate children to search for alternate approaches?

Establishing an Environment for the Arts

Remember to

- ✔ use indoor and outdoor settings for arts inspiration, exploration, and learning experiences.
- ✔ initiate experiences and activities that inspire children to engage in the arts.
- ✔ use the arts as catalysts and/or reinforcement for learning in other areas.
- ✔ provide a variety of toys, books, music, auditory and visual prompts.
- ✔ supply props and costume items, art supplies and materials, and instruments or items to make music.
- ✔ create centers that facilitate and encourage arts exploration—listening, viewing, creating, examining, and pretending.
- ✔ provide verbal, written and illustrated directions for using and storing materials, tools, resources, and manipulatives.
- ✔ color or symbol code and/or clearly label learning items and their storage places so that children can easily select and put things away.
- ✔ display a variety of print or illustrative materials that show or relate to the arts.
- ✔ use arts learning to reinforce classroom behavior, routines, discipline, communication, learning, creativity, and safe risk taking.
- ✔ encourage children as a group rather than call attention to achievements of individual children as models, since this may inhibit confidence.

Arts Materials

- ☐ Art supplies (crayons, finger paints, papers, glue, plastic scissors)
- ☐ Art media (aluminum foil, scrape fabrics, magazine pictures, found objects)
- ☐ Props (balls, stuffed animals, household items)
- ☐ Costumes (hats, clothing, shoes, masks, scarves, fans, glasses)
- ☐ Classroom rhythm instruments (tambourines, rhythm sticks, bells, drums)
- ☐ Environmental sound producers (cookie sheets, pots and pans, bottles, gourds)
- ☐ Music and sound effects
- ☐ illustrated materials
- ☐ Objects children find and bring in

A Word of Caution about Arts Materials

The arts are inherently creative activities, and at this age, the arts environment is generally exploratory. Give special attention to chemical composition of substances, sharp points or edges, breakable items, and things that should not be consumed.

Arts Education
National Standards for Arts Education

The National Arts Education Association developed the *National Standards for Arts Education* in 1994. These are incorporated into the goals of the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study* and are indicated in parentheses in the following section.

North Carolina Standard Course of Study

Arts Education K-2 Goals and Objectives

Dance

Goal 1: The student will identify and demonstrate elements and skills in dance. (National Standard 1)

1.1 Develop kinesthetic awareness.

1.2 Understand the elements of dance: space, time and energy.

Goal 2: The student will understand the process of making a dance. (National Standard 2)

2.1 Understand that making a dance requires planning.

Goal 3: The student will understand dance as a way to create and communicate meaning. (National Standard 3)

3.1 Understand that dance is one among many forms of expression.

Goal 4: The student will apply and demonstrate critical and creative thinking skills in dance. (National Standard 4)

4.1 Understand that a problem can have multiple solutions.

4.2 Recognize similarities and differences in composition.

4.3 Demonstrate appropriate audience behavior while observing a dance.

Goal 5: The student will demonstrate and understand dance in various cultures and historical periods. (National Standard 5)

5.1 Understand the role of dance in various cultures.

Goal 6: The student will make connections between dance and healthful living. (National Standard 6)

6.1 Develop an awareness of the capabilities and limitations of the body.

6.2 Understand that dance requires discipline and personal commitment.

6.3 Adopt healthy practices which enhance the ability to dance.

6.4 Develop a positive attitude toward self, others, and the dance experience.

Goal 7: The student will make appropriate connections between dance and other disciplines. (National Standard 7)

7.1 Understand dance as a way of exploring other content areas.

Music

Goal 1: The student will sing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music. (National Standard 1)

1.1 Demonstrate understandings, sensitivities and skills in singing.

1.2 Demonstrate appropriate vocal practices.

1.3 Show appreciation for the efforts of others.

1.4 Sing a varied repertoire of songs.

Goal 2: The student will perform on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music. (National Standard 2)

2.1 Demonstrate understandings, sensitivities, and skills in playing instruments.

2.2 Demonstrate understandings, sensitivities, and skills through appropriate instrumental practices.

2.3 Show appreciation for the efforts of others.

2.4 Play a varied repertoire.

Goal 3: The student will improvise melodies, variations, and accompaniments. (National Standard 3)

3.1 Demonstrate the ability to improvise a variety of musical structures.

Goal 4: The student will compose and arrange music within specific guidelines. (National Standard 4)

4.1 Demonstrate the ability to compose music.

4.2 Demonstrate the ability to arrange music.

Goal 5: The student will read and notate music. (National Standard 5)

5.1 Demonstrate related understandings, sensitivities and skills in reading and notating music.

Goal 6: The student will listen to, analyze, and describe music. (National Standard 6)

6.1 Identify simple musical forms.

6.2 Develop simple auditory skills.

6.3 Use appropriate terminology in explaining music, music notation, musical instruments and voices, and music performances.

6.4 Identify and describe sounds from a wide variety of sources.

Goal 7: The student will evaluate music and music performances. (National Standard 7)

7.1 Devise and apply criteria for evaluating compositions and performances.

7.2 Explain, using appropriate terminology, personal preferences for specific musical works and styles.

Goal 8: The student will understand relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts. (National Standard 8)

8.1 Identify similarities and differences in the meanings of common terms used in the various arts.

8.2 Identify ways in which the principles and subject matter of other disciplines taught in the school are interrelated with those of music.

Goal 9: The student will understand music in relation to history and culture. (National Standard 9)

9.1 Identify by genre or style aural examples of music from different historical periods and cultures.

9.2 Describe in simple terms how elements of music are used in music examples from various cultures of the world.

9.3 Identify various uses of music in daily experiences and describe characteristics that make certain music suitable for each use.

9.4 Identify and describe roles of musicians in various music settings and in various cultures.

9.5 Demonstrate audience behavior appropriate for the context and style of music performed.

9.6 Demonstrate audience behavior appropriate for the context and style of music performed.

Goal 10: The student will demonstrate the ability to make informed decisions as a consumer of music.

10.1 Develop an understanding that quality in music depends on the music itself and/or the way in which it is performed.

10.2 Demonstrate an understanding that quality in music equipment depends on the materials of which it is made and the way in which it is constructed.

10.3 Demonstrate an understanding that knowledge is essential to evaluate quality.

10.4 Demonstrate an understanding that informed decisions should be based on appropriate knowledge.

Theatre Arts

Goal 1: The student will write based on personal experience and heritage, imagination, literature, and history. (National Standard 1)

1.1 Recognize what drama is and how it happens.

1.2 Understand that stories have a setting.

1.3 Develop simple dramas.

Goal 2: The student will act by interacting in improvisations and assuming roles. (National Standard 2)

2.1 Recognize that pretend play is dramatic.

2.2 Differentiate between dramatic play and creative drama.

2.3 Understand the difference between actor and character.

2.4 Develop and apply kinesthetic skills necessary for acting.

Goal 3: The student will design and produce theatre by conceptualizing and realizing artistic interpretations for informal or formal productions. (National Standard 3)

3.1 Understand that a playing space is a dramatic element.

3.2 Manipulate the playing space and materials to create an environment.

Goal 4: The student will direct through planning and presenting informal or formal productions. (National Standard 4)

4.1 Experience artistic decision making in the creation of drama.

4.2 Experience the process of planning and presenting a dramatic work.

Goal 5: The student will research by finding information to support informal or formal productions. (National Standard 5)

5.1 Choose ideas, objects or other stimuli to use as a basis for drama activities.

Goal 6: The student will compare and integrate art forms by analyzing traditional theatre, dance, music, visual arts, and new art forms. (National Standard 6)

6.1 Explore other art forms.

6.2 Explore how other dramatic media and art forms relate to theatre.

Goal 7: The student will analyze, critique, and construct meaning from informal and formal theatre, film, television, and electronic media productions. (National Standard 7)

7.1 Respond to how drama affects our thoughts and feelings.

7.2 Respond to differences between live and recorded productions.

Goal 8: The student will understand context by analyzing the role of theatre, film, television, and electronic media in the past and present. (National Standard 8)

8.1 Develop an awareness that drama comes from all cultures throughout time.

8.2 Understand the impact of theatre, film, television, and electronic media on people's lives.

Visual Arts

Goal 1: The student will develop critical and creative thinking skills and perceptual awareness necessary for understanding and producing art.

1.1 Plan and organize for creating art.

1.2 Develop strategies for imagining and implementing images.

1.3 Recognize that in a world of imagination there is no right or wrong, but some solutions are better than others.

1.4 Recognize that images from reality and from fantasy may be used to create original art.

1.5 Show development of ideas across time.

1.6 Use all senses to gain information.

Goal 2: The student will develop skills necessary for understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes. (National Standard 1)

2.1 Explore unique properties and potential of materials.

2.2 Learn techniques and processes for working with each material.

2.3 Use different media and techniques expressively.

2.4 Use art materials and tools in a safe and responsible manner.

Goal 3: The student will organize the components of a work into a cohesive whole through knowledge of organizational principles of design and art elements. (National Standard 2)

3.1 Recognize and apply the elements of art in an aesthetic composition.

3.2 Recognize and apply the design principles used in composition.

3.3 Recognize that diverse solutions are preferable to predetermined visual solutions.

3.4 Recognize the value of intuitive perceptions in the problem-solving process.

3.5 Recognize the value of experimentation in the problem-solving process.

Goal 4: The student will choose and evaluate a range of subject matter and ideas to communicate intended meaning in artworks. (National Standard 3)

4.1 Demonstrate the use of life surroundings and personal experiences to express ideas and feelings visually.

4.2 Interpret the environment through art.

4.3 Invent original and personal imagery to convey meaning and not rely on copying, tracing, patterns, or duplicated materials.

4.4 Explore how artists develop personal imagery and style.

Goal 5: The student will understand the visual arts in relation to history and cultures. (National Standard 4)

5.1 Know that the visual arts have a history, purpose, and function in all cultures.

5.2 Identify specific works of art as belonging to particular cultures, times, and places.

5.3 Introduce works of art from different times and cultures.

5.4 Recognize selected works of art and artists.

5.5 Recognize the existence of universal themes in art throughout history.

5.6 Recognize that cultures have different ideas about what is pleasing and acceptable (aesthetics).

Goal 6: The student will reflect upon and assess the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others. (National Standard 5)

6.1 Understand there are various purposes for creating works of visual art.

6.2 Describe how people's experiences influence the development of specific artworks.

6.3 Accept other's work and ideas as unique expressions of themselves.

6.4 Recognize that we should learn from our mistakes as part of the creative process.

6.5 Critique artwork through the use of: proper vocabulary, art elements and design principles, meaning, feeling, mood, and ideas.

6.6 Understand there are varied responses to specific artworks.

Goal 7: The student will perceive connections between visual arts and other disciplines. (National Standard 6)

7.1 Identify connections between the visual arts and other disciplines.

7.2 Explore connections within the arts disciplines.

7.3 Discuss how the artwork people produce reflects the times in which they live.

7.4 Recognize how current technology affects visual arts and other disciplines.

Goal 8: The student will develop an awareness of art as an avocation and profession.

8.1 Develop an awareness of art as an avocation.

8.2 Develop an awareness of art as a profession.

8.3 Discover that art provides an opportunity for lifelong learning, both vocationally and avocationally.

Resources

Classroom Use

Andress, B. L. (Ed.) (1989). *Promising practices: Prekindergarten music education.* Reston, VA: Music Educators National Conference.

Barlin, A. (1979). *Teaching your wings to fly: The nonspecialist's guide to movement activities for young children.* Santa Monica, CA: Goodyear.

Bissinger, K., & Renfro, N. (1990). *Leap into learning!* Austin, TX: Nancy Renfro Studios.

Cook, W. D. (1993). *Center stage: A curriculum for the performing arts.* Palo Alto, CA: Dale Seymour Publications.

Joyce, M. (1980). *First steps in teaching creative dance to children,* 2nd edition. Palo Alto, CA: Mayfield.

Karnes, M. B. (1979). *Creative art for learning.* Reston, VA: National Art Education Association.

Palmer, M., & Sims, W. L. (1993). *Music in prekindergarten: Planning and teaching.* Reston, VA: Music Educators National Conference.

Rowen, B. (1982). *Learning through movement: Activities for the preschool and elementary grades.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Schwartz, D., & Aldrich, D, (Eds.). (1985). *Give them roots...and wings!: A guide to drama in the elementary grades.* New Orleans: Anchorage Press.

Stinson, S. (1988). *Dance for young children: Finding the magic in movement.* Reston, VA: National Dance Association and American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance.

Thompson, C. (Ed.). (1992). *The visual arts and early childhood learning*. Reston, VA: National Art Education Association.

Professional Development

Andress, B. L., & Walker, L. M. (Eds.). (1992). *Readings in early childhood music education*. Reston, VA: Music Educators National Conference.

Baker, D. W. (1990). Toward a sensible education: Inquiry into the role of visual arts in early childhood education. *Visual arts research, 20*(2), pp. 92-104.

Curtis, S.R. (1982). *The joy of movement in early childhood*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Pinciotti, P. (1993). Creative drama and young children: The dramatic learning connection." *Arts Education Policy Review, 94*(6), pp. 24-28

Russell, J. (1975). *Creative movement and dance for children*. Boston: Plays.

Spodek, B. (1993). Selecting activities in the arts for early childhood education. *Arts Education Policy Review, 94*(6) pp. 11-17.

Healthful Living

preparing children to be safe, healthy, and physically active

- Strengthens personal safety skills
- Helps children maintain healthy and productive lives
- Promotes development of physical fitness
- Helps children develop social/emotional competence
- Develops motor skills

Foundations for Learning Healthful Living

Helping students to be safe, healthy, and physically active is the primary focus of a healthful living education program. You can accomplish this by strengthening a child's personal safety, health, and fitness behaviors. An effective early childhood program can make a difference in development of important healthful living skills.

Questions to prompt thinking

- How do you stay safe when you are outside playing?
- How can you stay safe when you are visiting a new place?
- How do you know which foods are best for you?
- What do you say to someone who has a toy you want?
- How do you feel when you come to school?
- How do you feel when you have played very hard?
- What is your favorite outside game? Why?

Think about the healthful living learning objectives addressed by these questions. What are some other healthful living education questions you use?

Developing and Maintaining a Physically Active Lifestyle

Movement and physical activity are at the very center of young children's lives. Physical fitness and health are important concerns to many adults, yet many of today's children are obese, physically inactive, and unfit. Teach young children to value physical fitness and to understand the basic biological need to be physically active. Invite children to demonstrate different activities that contribute to cardiovascular fitness. Offer young children a wide variety of opportunities to develop motor skills, develop and refine creative movements, demonstrate manipulative skills, display appropriate behaviors during social situations, and express an enjoyment for movement experiences.

> ***Parents and teachers have become increasingly aware of the importance of providing children with meaningful movement experiences. For children, movement is at the very center of their life.***
> **—Dr. David Gallahue**

Physical Well-Being—Children need to be active daily. Integrate physical activities that are aligned to the curriculum throughout the day.

Physical activity promotes essential changes in brain structure and brain function in young children. Sensory stimulation, physical activity, and motor experiences are connected to optimal growth and development of the nervous system.

Physical education assists development of perceptual-motor abilities including vision, balance, fine-motor skills, and underlying skills needed to be successful in the classroom.

Physical activity enhances self-concept and self-esteem by developing increased motor confidence, assertiveness, independence, and self-control.

Reinforcing and Developing Positive Social and Interpersonal Behaviors

Encourage young children to demonstrate ways they can manage frustration/stress, be responsible for their own behaviors and actions, and cope appropriately with fear, embarrassment, and anger. Help them learn productive methods to deal with situations that involve aggression and/or bullying, to learn to resolve disputes, and to behave in ways that respect the rights of others.

Understanding Age Appropriate Health Risks

Helping children become aware of health risks for their age group and influences on their health and wellness are key goals for early childhood education. Age-appropriate learning for young children includes the importance of eating breakfast and balanced meals, getting the proper amounts of rest and exercise, washing hands before meals and after rest room use, and using seat belts. Young children also need to learn how to respond to traffic, fire, and other warning signs, sounds, and symbols as well as how to get help in an emergency. They should understand the potential impact of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs on their lives.

Implications for Teaching Healthful Living

How can you

- recognize and respond to diversity in children and encourage all children to participate in physical activities?
- provide age and physically appropriate equipment?
- ensure a safe environment for physical activity?
- provide individual as well as group physical activities?
- encourage children to tolerate and accept the efforts of others?
- model the use of language to express feelings?
- provide opportunities that celebrate children's current efforts and challenge them to meet new goals?
- provide time, space, and appropriate accessories for rest time?
- use physical activities to enhance learning in other areas?

Establishing an Environment for Healthful Living Education

Remember to

- ✔ use indoor and outdoor settings for activities
- ✔ provide a variety of choices of toys for large and small motor activities for individuals, small groups, and larger groups
- ✔ provide props, materials, and real opportunities for role play about good nutrition and eating habits
- ✔ provide props in the block center for children to explore traffic, fire, and other safety symbols
- ✔ provide opportunities for children to work together
- ✔ encourage children to talk and help each other with problem- solving situations
- ✔ find time for individual conversations with children
- ✔ have space available for children to rest
- ✔ provide for non-sleepers during nap time
- ✔ involve the children in establishing and understanding classroom rules
- ✔ make sure that physical activities are fun!

Healthful Living Materials

☐ Equipment for jumping, grasping, & climbing

☐ Balance beams

☐ Hoops

☐ Jump ropes

☐ Gymnastic mats

☐ Bicycles

☐ Scooters

☐ Wagons

☐ Bean bags

☐ Balls

☐ Yarn balls

☐ Foam balls

☐ Nerf balls

☐ Beach balls

☐ Movement-oriented records, video tapes, and/or cassette tapes

Appropriate space for running, jumping, and other large-muscle activities to use these materials properly

Healthful Living
North Carolina Standard Course of Study

The purpose of healthful living education is to provide appropriate instruction to help young children acquire behaviors that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. This can be achieved through a program that reflects the needs of the student throughout his/her school experience. A specifically designed, adapted physical education program addresses special needs of children with individualized education plans.

The K-12 Healthful Living Education program, when appropriately reinforced in a comprehensive manner, can be expected to have the following benefits for all students:

- fewer risk-taking behaviors that contribute to disease, injury and death
- desirable social behaviors and increased levels of self-image
- positive behaviors that promote higher levels of health
- higher morale and productivity and less absenteeism by students
- development of appropriate levels of personal fitness and an understanding of the importance of physical activity for maintaining a viable, productive life
- fewer instances of students dropping out of school due to health-related behaviors (e.g., pregnancy, alcohol and drug use)
- lower health care expenses
- an increased awareness and respect for cultural diversity through participation in physical activities

- better health-educated citizens who are equipped to handle personal, social, environmental, safety, and medical care decisions
- development of skills and behaviors that will enable students to be proficient in at least three lifetime physical activities

Kindergarten Healthful Living Education Outline

Preparatory

1.1 Describing influences on health (e.g., food, rest, exercise, hygiene/cleanliness).
1.2 Relating health, feelings, and behaviors.
1.3 Explaining health risks for age group.

Stress Management

2.1 Naming feelings.
2.2 Verbalizing feelings.
2.3 Accepting the normalcy of feelings.
2.4 Identifying and making choices.
2.5 Accepting and carrying out personal responsibilities.

Protecting Self/Others

3.1 Preventing the spread of germs.
3.2 Using seat belts.
3.3 Describing meanings of traffic signs and signals.
3.4 Responding to warning signs, sounds, and labels.
3.5 Demonstrating the stop, drop, and roll response to burning clothing.
3.6 Getting help in an emergency.
3.7 Identifying items that can burn oneself.

Relationships

4.1 Distinguishing between safe and risky means of getting attention.

4.2 Seeking and offering help.

4.3 Sharing objects and time.

4.4 Recognizing and accepting that each person is unique and special.

Nutrition/Weight Management

5.1 Identifying foods by using the senses.

5.2 Naming and categorizing foods.

5.3 Identifying health promoting foods.

5.4 Distinguishing between safe and unsafe substances to put in mouth.

Substance Abuse

6.1 Being careful with medicines.

6.2 Affirming choice not to smoke.

Personal Fitness Skills

7.1 Complete a fitness assessment to gather information pertaining to his or her health-related fitness levels.

7.2 Demonstrate the ability to recognize the two suggested sites on the body to monitor the heart rate and to understand that physical activity increases an individual's heart rate.

7.3 Demonstrate knowledge of flexibility through stretching exercises and perform exercises that enhance flexibility in a variety of muscle groups.

7.4 Demonstrate knowledge of muscular strength and endurance through strengthening exercises and perform exercises that enhance muscular strength and endurance in a variety of muscle groups.

Recreational Dance Skills

8.1 Demonstrate non-locomotor movements using different parts of the body (such as head, shoulders, arms, legs, chest, feet, and others).

8.2 Demonstrate a variety of locomotor and combination movements.

8.3 Utilize non-locomotor, locomotor, and combination skills to demonstrate movements in creative sequences and in simple patterned dances.

Game and Sport Skills

9.1 Demonstrate a variety of locomotor and combination skills while participating in different games and activities.

9.2 Develop movement control for safe participation in games and sports.

9.3 Demonstrate the skills of catching, kicking, throwing, and striking necessary for participating in a game.

9.4 Develop listening skills and the ability to follow instructions in sequence during a game situation.

Developmental Gymnastic Skills

10.1 Demonstrate the concepts of self-space and general space.

10.2 Demonstrate a variety of non-locomotor, locomotor, and combination skills using a variety of shapes typically used in gymnastics.

10.3 Combine these body shapes with a variety of non-locomotor, locomotor, and combination skills in a simple routine.

First Grade Healthful Living Education Outline

Preparatory

1.1 Summarizing health risks for age group

1.2 Predicting consequences of various health-related behaviors.

Stress Management

2.1 Differentiating between healthful and unhealthful methods of expressing feelings.

2.2 Identifying behaviors controlled by self.

2.3 Demonstrating methods of changing unwanted feelings.

2.4 Demonstrating methods of dealing with restlessness and tenseness.

Protecting Self/Others

3.1 Demonstrating stop and search when entering or crossing a street or road.

3.2 Following playground, school bus, school ground safety rules.

3.3 Making emergency phone calls.

3.4 Identifying firefighters by their appearance.

Relationships

4.1 Differentiating between appropriate and inappropriate touch.

4.2 Seeking adult assistance for inappropriate touch.

4.3 Recognizing others to whom one is important.

4.4 Recognizing those who are important to oneself.

4.5 Respecting the rights of others.

4.6 Describing ways of resolving conflicts without fighting.

4.7 Explaining the differences between the acceptability of feelings and acceptability of behaviors.

4.8 Recognizing that different people have different abilities.

Nutrition/Weight Management

5.1 Describing the special importance of breakfast.

5.2 Choosing healthful breakfast menus from a variety of alternatives.

5.3 Explaining how foods are the source of all physical parts of the body and the source of body energy.

5.4 Naming important guides for healthful eating: eat breakfast, eat many different kinds of food, don't eat too much of any one food.

Substance Abuse

6.1 Identifying alcohol and tobacco containers as ones to stay away from.

6.2 Reporting but not touching needles/syringes.

Personal Fitness Skills

7.1 Completing a health-related personal fitness test and achieving fitness scores at an acceptable level.

7.2 Demonstrating the ability to understand the concept of pacing during cardiovascular endurance activities.

7.3 Demonstrating knowledge of flexibility through stretching exercises and perform exercises that enhance flexibility in a variety of muscle groups.

7.4 Demonstrating knowledge of muscular strength and endurance through strengthening exercises and perform exercises that enhance muscular strength and endurance in a variety of muscle groups.

Recreational Dance Skills

8.1 Demonstrating using non-locomotor, locomotor, and combination skills in a sequence.

8.2 Demonstrating the concepts of time, force, space, and flow.

8.3 Demonstrating the ability to control the body using non-locomotor, locomotor, and combination movements when directed by instrumental cues.

8.4 Using acquired non-locomotor, locomotor, and combination movements to demonstrate movement skills in a creative sequence and in simple patterned dances.

Games and Sport Skills

9.1 Demonstrating throwing and catching skills necessary for participation in games and sports.

9.2 Demonstrating kicking skills necessary for participation in a variety of activities, drills, and/or games.

9.3 Developing striking skills using body parts and extensions necessary for participation in games and sports.

9.4 Developing safety skills and working cooperatively with others in game situations.

9.5 Demonstrating basic jump rope skills.

Developmental Gymnastic Skills

10.1 Demonstrating static and dynamic balances using different body parts.

10.2 Demonstrating forward and backward rolling patterns.

10.3 Performing rolling movements that can be used as safety rolls.

10.4 Creating gymnastic routines which focus on balance and rolling patterns with or without equipment.

Second Grade Healthful Living Education Outline

Preparatory

1.1 Summarizing health risks for age group.

1.2 Identifying own health-promoting behaviors.

Stress Management

2.1 Sharing thoughts and feelings.

2.2 Distinguishing between evaluations of performance and basic worth.

2.3 Coping with fear.

Protecting Self-Others

3.1 Demonstrating tooth brushing and flossing.
3.2 Describing benefits of tooth brushing and flossing.
3.3 Demonstrating the prevention of germ spread through food, water, air, and touch.
3.4 Practicing measures to prevent contact with the body fluids of others.
3.5 Getting help in an emergency.
3.6 Demonstrating the stop, drop, and roll response to burning clothing.
3.7 Handling flammable liquids safely.

Relationships

4.1 Recognizing and responding to others' feelings.
4.2 Judging behaviors as promoting or hindering friendships.
4.3 Giving and receiving compliments.
4.4 Apologizing when appropriate.

Nutrition/Weight Management

5.1 Categorizing simple and processed foods according to the major food groups in a balanced diet.
5.2 Identifying the sweets, fats, and oils food group as the least important for healthful eating.
5.3 Distinguishing between balanced and unbalanced meals in own eating patterns.
5.4 Predicting characteristics of persons resulting from unbalance of sweets, fats, and oils in diet.
5.5 Identifying food snacks that are healthy for teeth.

Substance Abuse

6.1 Analyzing impact of smoking on oneself.

6.2 Describing effects of alcohol use on behavior.

Personal Fitness Skills

7.1 Completing a health-related personal fitness test and achieving fitness scores at an acceptable level.

7.2 Recognizing the concept of recovery heart rate.

7.3 Demonstrating an understanding of nutrition as related to personal fitness.

Recreational Dance Skills

8.1 Exploring various even and uneven rhythmic patterns using non-locomotor, locomotor, and combination movements.

8.2 Demonstrating simple square and folk dances.

8.3 Creating and refining a movement sequence with a beginning, middle, and ending.

Game and Sport Skills

9.1 Demonstrating the manipulative skills of catching a ball (or similar objects) while participating in a game or other activity.

9.2 Demonstrating the manipulative skill of trapping while participating in a game or other activity.

9.3 Demonstrating the manipulative skill of striking necessary for participation in a drill, activity, or game situation.

9.4 Developing social behavior skills by helping others needing assistance in game situations.

9.5 Developing social behavior skills dealing with responsibility in physical education classes.

9.6 Demonstrating the ability to jump a short jump rope.

Developmental Gymnastic Skills

10.1 Demonstrating body control while moving on a low balance beam or similar object.

10.2 Demonstrating a variety of static balance skills on the low beam or similar object.

10.3 Demonstrating examples of inversion using mats and other equipment.

10.4 Creating gymnastic routines using balance and inversion movements.

Resources

Professional Books

Carlton, E.B., & Weikart, P. S. (1996). *Guide to rhythmically moving*. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press.

Carlton, E.B., & Weikart, P. S. (1989). *Movement plus music*. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press.

Carlton, E.B., & Weikart, P. S. (1988). *Movement plus rhymes, songs, and singing games*. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press.

Dauer, V., & Pangrazzi, R. (1996). *Dynamic physical education for elementary school children*. Riverside, NJ: MacMillan.

Graham, G. (1993). *Children moving*. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Company.

Records, Cassettes, Videos, Kits

"Birdy Dance," "Hokey Pokey," "Bingo Waltz," and other novelty dances, fun dance mixers, and square dance records. Florham Park, NJ: Folkcraft Records/Dance Record Distributors. Phone (201) 377-1885. Or Macks Creek, MO: Lloyd Shaw Foundation. Phone (314) 363-5868.

Hop, skip, and jump. [Video]. Columbia, MD: Heartbeat Enterprises. Phone (410) 381-8553.

"Jump Rope Skills." [Wall chart]. Columbia, MD: Heartbeat Enterprises. Phone (410) 381-8553.

Skip to it! [Book & cassette]. Columbia, MD: Heartbeat Enterprises. Phone (410) 381-8553.

Teaching movement & dance: Beginning folkdance video series. High/Scope's beginning level package. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press. Phone (800) 40-PRESS.

Rhythmically moving. High/Scope's beginning level package. [Records or cassettes]. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press. Phone (800) 40-PRESS.

Walking for little children (1991). Clayton, MO: Creative Walking. Phone (800) 762-9255.

The walking wellness teacher's guide. (1992).Clayton, MO: Creative Walking. Phone (800) 762-9255.

Science

the journey toward understanding the natural world

- Makes sense of and describes the world through simple experiments and investigations.
- Asks questions about objects, organisms and events in the environment.
- Makes observations, using measures and instruments.
- Develops explanations.
- Uses observations to develop predictions.

Foundations for Learning Science

Children learn science as they explore the world through observation and manipulation of common objects and materials in their environment. They compare, describe, and sort as they begin to form explanations of how things work in the world. Science requires touching, tasting, feeling, smelling, pushing, pulling, rotating, mixing, comparing, and more; therefore, classroom activities must be organized so that children can experience and manipulate materials. Developing a knowledge base to explain or predict the world requires many experiences over a long period of time.

Questions to Promote Thinking

- **Does it walk or hop?**
- **What changes do you see?**
- **Which have changed the most?**
- **How do you know?**
- **Which one is heavier? How could you find out? Why do you think so?**
- **What can you add to the class definition of ....(animals)?**
- **What characteristics did the........(flower) have that made it a.......(plant)?**
- **What do you think will happen?**
- **Why do you think the ice melted?**
- **Can you draw a picture of your findings?**
- **Which holds more—the tall, thin jar or the short, fat one?**

Think about the science-learning objectives addressed by these questions. What are some other science questions you use?

Children study the natural world, propose explanations, and solve problems based on the evidence they derive from their work. Establish a climate of inquiry so children can develop science concepts.

Observing

Looking and *observing* are not the same thing! Encourage children to look carefully for specific actions or information so that they become observers. Observation is not limited to visual input; let it involve all the senses—seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and feeling. Provide guidance in observation techniques, but encourage children to discuss their own personal observations and make sense of them.

Communicating

Encourage children to share observations and data collections through various means. They can talk about their findings; make pictorial records; dramatize; produce charts and graphs; or write to share information, data, and conclusions. For example, the popular books *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* and *Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear?* can be revised to record data collected by students. Through a rich variety of multi-sensory experiences and discussions, children begin to understand how to acquire knowledge in the field of science.

Comparing

Collecting data involves comparing and measuring. Measurement includes use of standardized measures, and also involves comparisons, approximations, and non-standard units. Children can measure classroom pet food by scoops, estimate how much pets will eat, and compare amounts different animals eat. They can gauge heights of their bean plants with paper clip chains, compare the sizes of rocks to buttons, and observe the height of water produced when an ice cube melts in a beaker.

Organizing

Organizing is systematically compiling and classifying information. Children begin to classify by function, color, or shape. Encourage children to classify objects and to explain how they grouped objects. Encourage them to classify blocks by shape; group materials that are stored in the art area; and sort buttons, leaves, shells, rocks, and other collections.

Predicting

Simple experiments can help children relate concrete and abstract ideas. They can identify and explain observations. Children relate their experiences to new situations as they make predictions. This is the first step in formulating and testing hypotheses. For example, when they see clouds, they can predict that it might rain or snow.

Inferring

Young children use the skill of inferring in very informal ways. Through concrete experiences, children can make observations of actions on a particular material and infer what will happen to a different material under the same conditions.

Applying

Children use knowledge and skills to solve problems. As children advance from concrete to more abstract thinking, they are better able to apply knowledge to new situations.

Implications for Teaching Science

How can you

- create an environment in which teachers and children work together as active learners?
- engage children in scientific inquiry generated by questions from their own experiences?
- encourage children's curiosity and openness to new ideas and data?
- recognize and respond to diversity in children and encourage all children to participate fully in learning science?
- have purposeful conversations with children about science ideas?
- encourage and model the skills of scientific inquiry, as well as the curiosity, openness to new ideas, and skepticism that characterize science?
- provide a safe environment for children and guide them in safe, and appropriate use of materials and animals?
- arrange opportunities for children to work individually, in small groups and in whole group situations?
- encourage children to communicate information in a variety of ways and through a variety of media?
- encourage self-directed problem solving and experimentation?
- extend learning by asking questions or making suggestions that stimulate thinking in science?
- provide proper food and habitats for animals in the classroom?
- provide a balanced science program including activities that focus on biological, physical and earth sciences?

Establishing a Science Environment

Remember to

- ✓ set up centers to give children opportunities to engage all their senses, to extend acquired knowledge, and to encourage further explorations.
- ✓ observe and pose questions.
- ✓ listen to the language children use when they explain their understandings of concepts because it provides valuable information for planning and assessment.
- ✓ have science related books and toys readily available.
- ✓ use both indoor and outdoor settings for scientific observations and explorations.
- ✓ label science materials clearly and provide adequate storage where children can easily select and put away their materials.
- ✓ provide a variety of print materials that offer information on animals, plants, earth materials, water, sound, light, electricity and other science-related topics.
- ✓ provide a variety of toys, games, computers, collections and other materials for science.

Science materials

- ☐ Binoculars
- ☐ Magnifying glasses
- ☐ Kaleidoscopes
- ☐ View masters
- ☐ Color paddles
- ☐ Braille books
- ☐ Cameras
- ☐ Microscope
- ☐ Eyepieces that offer an insect's view of the world
- ☐ Mirrors
- ☐ Models of eye, ear, teeth
- ☐ Popsicle sticks
- ☐ Bells
- ☐ Sound cans
- ☐ Musical instruments
- ☐ Cans, beans, sand, rocks for making sound cans
- ☐ Tuning forks
- ☐ Stethoscope
- ☐ Containers
- ☐ Walkie-talkies
- ☐ Food coloring
- ☐ Spoons & shovels for digging
- ☐ Classroom pets
- ☐ Terrarium
- ☐ Scratch & sniff stickers
- ☐ Textured materials (fake fur, bark, shells, pine cones, sandpaper, metal, cotton)

National Science Standards

Content and Learning Standards

Science as Inquiry Standards

- Abilities necessary to do scientific inquiry
- Understanding of scientific concepts
- An appreciation of "how we know" what we know in science
- Understanding the nature of science
- Skills to become independent inquirers about the natural world
- The dispositions to use the skills, abilities, and attitudes associated with science

Unifying Concepts and Processes

- Systems, order, and organization
- Evidence, models, and explanation
- Change, constancy, and measurement
- Evolution and equilibrium
- Form and function

Physical Science

- Properties of objects and material
- Position and motion of objects
- Light, heat, electricity, and magnetism

Disciplines

Life Science
- Characteristics of organisms
- Life cycles of organisms
- Organisms and environments

Earth and Space Science
- Properties of earth materials
- Objects in the sky
- Changes in earth and sky

Science and Technology
- Abilities of technological design
- Understandings about science and technology
- Abilities to distinguish between natural objects and objects made by humans

Science in Personal and Social Perspectives
- Personal health
- Characteristics and changes in populations
- Types of resources
- Changes in environments
- Science and technology in local challenges

History and Nature of Science
- Science as a human endeavor (National Academy of Science, 1996)

Science
North Carolina Standard Course of Study

Kindergarten Competency Goals & Objectives

Goal 1: The learner will develop an understanding of the nature of science.

1.1 Show that scientific knowledge is public

Goal 2: The learner will develop the ability to use science process skills.

2.1 Demonstrate the ability to observe.
2.2 Demonstrate the ability to classify.
2.3 Demonstrate the ability to use numbers.
2.4 Demonstrate the ability to communicate.
2.5 Demonstrate the ability to measure.
2.6 Demonstrate the ability to infer.
2.7 Demonstrate the ability predict.

Goal 3: The learner will develop the ability to use science manipulative skills.

3.1 Demonstrate safe procedures while doing science activities.
3.2 Demonstrate the ability to choose appropriate equipment for science activities.
3.3 Demonstrate the ability to use simple science materials and equipment.
3.4 Demonstrate proper care for equipment and materials.
3.5 Demonstrate the ability to properly handle and care for living organisms.

Goal 4: The learner will develop a positive attitude toward science.

4.1 Exhibit a positive attitude toward learning and experiencing science.

4.2 Exhibit a positive attitude for the need for conservation, preservation, and wise use of natural resources.

Goal 5: The learner will construct an understanding of self and his/her world.

5.1 Develop self-awareness by asking questions and communicating with others.

5.2 Use the senses to investigate the natural world and changes within it.

5.3 Interact with the environment to cause changes.

First Grade Competency Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: The learner will develop an understanding of the nature of science.

1.1 Show that scientific knowledge is public.

Goal 2: The learner will develop the ability to use science process skills.

2.1 Demonstrate the ability to observe.

2.2 Demonstrate the ability to classify.

2.3 Demonstrate the ability to use numbers.

2.4 Demonstrate the ability to communicate.

2.5 Demonstrate the ability to measure.
2.6. Demonstrate the ability to infer.
2.7 Demonstrate the ability to predict.

Goal 3: The learner will develop the ability to use science manipulative skills.
3.1 Demonstrate safe procedures while doing science activities.
3.2 Demonstrate the ability to choose and/or assemble appropriate equipment for science activities.
3.3. Demonstrate the ability to use science materials and equipment.
3.4 Demonstrate proper care for equipment and materials.
3.5 Demonstrate the ability to properly handle and care for living organisms.

Goal 4: The learner will develop a positive attitude toward science.
4.1 Exhibit a positive attitude toward learning and experiencing science.
4.2 Exhibit a positive attitude for the need for conservation, preservation, and wise use of natural resources.

Goal 5: The learner will construct an understanding of living and nonliving objects.
5.1 Explore living organisms, their characteristics, environments, and needs to sustain life.
5.2 Investigate material objects and their properties.
5.3 Explore safe practices in the environment.

Second Grade Competency Goals & Objectives

Goal 1: The learner will develop an understanding of the nature of science.

1.1 Show that scientific knowledge is public.
1.2 Recognize that science is historic.
1.3 Demonstrate that scientific knowledge is replicable.

Goal 2: The learner will develop the ability to use science process skills.

2.1 Demonstrate the ability to observe.
2.2 Demonstrate the ability to classify.
2.3 Demonstrate the ability to use numbers.
2.4 Demonstrate the ability to communicate.
2.5 Demonstrate the ability to measure.
2.6 Demonstrate the ability to infer.
2.7 Demonstrate the ability to predict.
2.8 Demonstrate the ability to use space-time relations.
2.9 Demonstrate the ability to interpret data.
2.10 Demonstrate the ability to define operationally.
2.11 Demonstrate the ability to experiment.

Goal 3: The learner will develop the ability to use science manipulative skills.

3.1 Demonstrate safe procedures while doing science activities.
3.2 Demonstrate the ability to choose and/or assemble appropriate equipment for science activities.
3.3 Demonstrate the ability to use science materials and equipment.

3.4 Demonstrate proper care for equipment and materials.

3.5 Demonstrate the ability to properly handle and care for living organisms.

Goal 4: The learner will develop a positive attitude toward science.

4.1 Exhibit a positive attitude toward learning and experiencing science.

4.2 Exhibit a positive attitude for the need for conservation, preservation, and wise use of natural resources.

4.3 Exhibit a positive attitude toward the use of scientific inquiry as a way of thinking and problem solving.

Goal 5: The learner will construct an understanding of changes within the world.

5.1 Explore the characteristics of plants and animals and their life cycle changes.

5.2 Investigate the environmental adaptations of living organisms.

5.3 Engage in activities that build understanding of basic properties of matter and changes caused by interaction of matter.

5.4 Explore basic concepts of the nature of weather and related cycles.

5.5 Investigate how life has changed since prehistoric time.

Resources

Children's Books

Barton, B. (1993). *Dinosaurs, dinosaurs.*. New York: Harper Collins Children's Books.

Brown, M. (n.d.). *Big red barn*. New York: Trophy Picture Books.

Carle, E. (1994). *Very hungry caterpillar: Twenty-fifth anniversary edition*. New York: Philomel Books.

Freeman, D. (1968). *Corduroy*. City: ST. Viking Children's Books.

Ginsburg, M. (1991). *Across the stream*. New York: Greenwillow Books.

Ginsburg, M. (1987). *Mushroom in the rain.* Old Tappan,NJ: Simon & Schuster Children's Books

Hutchins, P. (1991). *Good night, owl.* Bellevue,WA: Aladin Paperbacks.

Krauss, R. (1993). *Carrott seed.* New York: Harper Collins Children's Books.

Most, B. (1991). *If the dinosaurs come back.* Orlando, FL: HarBrace Children's Books.

Sendack, M. (1991). *Chicken soup with rice.* New York: Harper Collins.

Ward, L. (1991). *I am eyes-ni macho.* New York: Blue Ribbon Books, Scholastic, Inc.

Williams, S. (1992). *I went walking.* Orlando, FL: HarBrace Children's Books.

Professional Books

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learning to be a good citizen

- Connects children to culture and history
- Teaches about membership and participation in group activities
- Shows how people relate to their environment
- Develops knowledge of self and others
- Demonstrates simple economic ideas

Social Studies

Foundations for Learning Social Studies

Studying culture helps young children understand themselves as both individuals and members of various groups. When young children have rich, diverse cultural experiences, they learn to respect, honor, and value all people. Children learn that people are alike and people are different. They learn to respect cultural similarities and differences. They recognize common and unique human characteristics and identify similarities and differences in family structures, lifestyles, ways of communicating, customs, and habits. They become active members of the classroom community.

Questions to promote thinking

- What chores do you have at home and at school?
- How do we get the food we eat?
- What stories do grown-ups tell you about when they were children?
- What things would you include in a map of your classroom? —school? —neighborhood?
- Why do we need to share?
- Why do we have rules for our classroom?
- How is trash collected in your neighborhood?

Think about the social studies learning objectives addressed by these questions. What are some other social studies questions you use?

Time, Continuity, Change

Young children are just beginning to understand time concepts. Learning about events of long ago is abstract and carries little meaning for them. Even though young children may not understand the concept of long ago, they are often quite interested in the past, especially as it relates to their families and themselves. Children can use the calendar and other artifacts to begin understanding chronological time. They can sequence events in their lives and in the lives of family members. They can appreciate stories of family history and their relation to present events. They can understand that change affects their lives and that change can be recorded to help understand how things change.

People, Places, Environments

Children's feelings about themselves are the foundations from which they learn to relate to and communicate with others. A sense of self helps children to live and work within a group and to relate to others as members of a group. Children can explore factors that contribute to their personal identity. They learn to look at themselves as individuals and to make choices and changes unique to their situations, needs, and interests. They develop positive self-concepts.

Individual Development And Identity

Young children are ego centric. As they enter play groups, preschool and kindergarten, and neighborhood and family groups, their horizons broaden. Classrooms are among the first places where children experiment with behaviors and are guided by caring adults to develop attitudes and dispositions necessary for successful group membership. As children learn to be contributing, active group members, they expand the quality and level of their social interactions. They begin to consider other points of view and to learn to work with others for the common good.

Individuals, Groups, Institutions

A sense of fairness and order in relationships is the beginning of the concept of governance for young children. They begin to recognize authority figures and understand that these people make and enforce rules in homes, schools, and communities. Children learn to identify the need for rules at home and in school. They begin to participate in rule making and other governance decisions such as planning activities and discussing rules. These tools help them to begin to learn strategies for resolving conflicts peacefully.

Power, Authority, Governance

As children see rules made and enforced at home and in school, they gain their first experiences with the core of politics and power and their use. Young children develop their senses of fairness and order through relationships with others. As they understand rules and their purposes, they begin to have opportunities to participate in decision making and in establishing rules. They learn to recognize persons who hold positions of authority. Games, field trips, guest speakers, and daily interactions with children and adults in school settings provide children with experiences in interpersonal relationships and opportunities to develop conflict resolution strategies. These experiences develop children's practical knowledge of power, authority, and governance.

Production, Distribution, Consumption

Young children can learn economic concepts through appropriate incidental and structured experiences. They can, for example, begin to distinguish between wants and needs and to understand them in terms of available resources. Children start to recognize basic needs of people. They begin to understand the difference between producers and consumers and learn that money and other forms of economic exchange are used to obtain goods and services. They can observe diverse jobs in their communities.

Science, Technology, Society

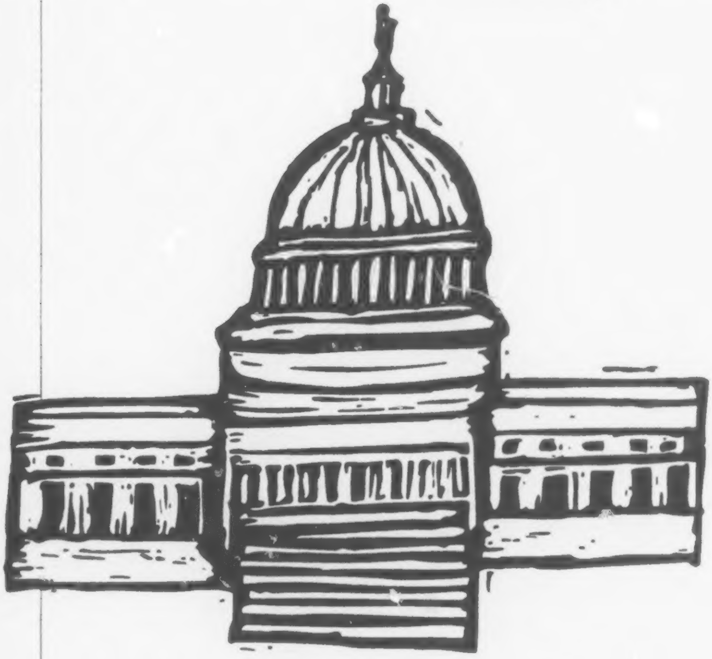
Young children can explore technologies that are part of their lives. From computers in the classroom to assistive technology, from recycling to space ships, children see science and technology touching their world. Children learn how technology influences communication and the community. They observe relationships among technology, environment, health, and welfare of citizens.

Global Connections

As young children move from egocentric perceptions of the world, they explore ways they are connected to their communities and the world beyond. They become aware of interdependence and the need to cooperate with others. Even very young children understand the need to protect the environment and actions they can take to do that. Young children can begin to understand basic issues of respect and human rights.

Civic Ideals and Practices

Classrooms provide young children many opportunities to learn about and practice basic democratic ideals. These ideals can be modeled and practiced in the classroom, home, and community. Children learn the rights and responsibilities of classroom membership. They begin to understand that self discipline and responsibility are basic to democracy.



Implications for teaching social studies

How can you

- provide opportunities for problem solving, decision making, and planning?
- encourage children to get information from a variety of sources?
- structure activities that encourage self management?
- structure activities that encourage social participation?
- incorporate a variety of individual, small group, and whole group activities?
- help children balance their sense of self with respect for others?
- affirm children's cultures and traditions?
- create an environment that encourages interactions?
- establish a feeling of community in the classroom?

Establishing a social studies environment

Remember to

- ✓ display maps, pictures, books, and videos so that children can get information from a variety of sources.
- ✓ show men, women, and children in a variety of roles, jobs, and activities that avoid stereotypes and emphasize inclusion and diversity.
- ✓ expand the learning environment by using field trips and community resources related to learning goals.
- ✓ invite grandparents and community elders to share experiences.
- ✓ use game time to learn rules that apply to various games.
- ✓ design activities and display items, such as clocks, calendars, schedules, timelines, and family trees, to illustrate time, continuity, and change.
- ✓ walk to the corner to watch local traffic then discuss safety and rules, kinds of vehicles, and reasons for traffic patterns.
- ✓ make sure that centers have props to encourage children to engage in problem solving, decision making, and planning.

Social Studies Materials

☐ Maps, including floor or rug maps and puzzles

☐ Globes

☐ Timelines

☐ Blocks and commercial block sets for building cities, communities, houses and neighborhoods

☐ Prop sets to accompany block play
  farm and zoo animals
  family and community workers
  transportation sets

☐ Puppets

☐ Flannel and magnetic boards

☐ Prop boxes with accessories for role play
  clothes
  tools
  equipment

☐ Artifacts and real materials from a variety of places, time periods, and cultures
  plows and butter churns
  boomerangs
  variety of foods
  quilts
  dolls

Curriculum Standards for Social Studies

These themes form the framework of the social studies standards:

- Culture
- Time, Continuity, and Change
- People, Places, and Environments
- Individual Development and Identity
- Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
- Power, Authority, and Governance
- Production, Distribution, and Consumption
- Science, Technology, and Society
- Global Connections

Social Studies Goals for Young Children

- To develop a positive self-concept within the context of understanding the similarities and differences of people.
- To acquire knowledge and understanding of the multiplicity of cultures within the society and the world, to recognize the contributions of each, and to explore the value systems of each culture.
- To develop a sense of the past in order for children to understand how the present has come about as well as to appreciate their heritage.
- To develop spatial relationships in order for children to understand how the location of their community relates to other areas of the world.

- To develop an understanding of how the social, economic, and political institutions within the society will permit children to learn about their roles within their groups.
- To develop an understanding of and appreciation for the environment and to consider how resources will be allocated in the future.
- To understand democratic norms and values, justice, and equality, in terms of smaller social entities of the family, classroom, and community.
- To develop skills that enhance children's abilities to learn, to make decisions, and to develop as competent, self-directed citizens.
- To develop a positive attitude toward knowledge and learning.
- To develop a spirit of inquiry that will enhance children's understanding of the world, so that they will become rational, humane, participating, effective members of a democratic society. (National Council for the Social Studies, 1984).

Social Studies Program
North Carolina Standard Course of Study

Kindergarten Competency Goals & Objectives
(The Individual and Group Relationships)

Goal 1: The learner will exhibit traits of good citizenship in the classroom and school.

1.1 Participate constructively in school and classroom activities.
1.2 Participate in democratic decision making and act in keeping with group decisions.
1.3 Assume responsibility in routine activities.

Goal 2: The learner will infer that individuals and families are alike and different.

2.1 Describe aspects of families.
2.2 Distinguish likenesses and differences among individuals and families.
2.3 Compare one's family life with that of another child.

Goal 3: The learner will apply understandings about the social environment to daily situations.

3.1 Describe aspects of the home environment and one's role in that environment.
3.2 Compare appropriate behaviors in home and school environments.
3.3 Demonstrate an understanding of appropriate behavior in different environments.

Goal 4: The learner will apply understandings of authority, responsibility, and justice in a democratic society.

4.1 Use established procedures in the classroom and school.
4.2 Respect persons in positions of authority.
4.3 Assume responsibility for one's own actions.
4.4 Recognize the need for fair rules and laws.
4.5 Analyze classroom problems and suggest fair solutions.

Goal 5: The learner will elaborate on the value of community services.

5.1 Recognize examples of community services.
5.2 Summarize jobs performed by community workers.
5.3 Identify relationships between community needs and community services.

Goal 6: The learner will characterize change in different settings.

6.1 Describe changes in one's self.
6.2 Identify changes in one's family.
6.3 Recognize changes in the classroom and school environments.

Goal 7: The learner will elaborate on religious and other cultural traditions in the community.

7.1 Identify religious and secular symbols associated with famous people, holidays, and special days.
7.2 Participate in special days that are observed by the class.
7.3 State reasons for observing special days and religious and secular holidays.

Goal 8: The learner will apply basic geographic concepts.

8.1 Locate and describe familiar places in home, classroom, and school settings.

8.2 Construct simple maps, models, and drawings of home, classroom, and school settings.

8.3 Analyze the functions of places in the home, the classroom, and the school.

8.4 Recognize seasonal changes.

8.5 Identify things in the natural environment that are important to one's self.

Goal 9: The learner will apply basic economic concepts to individuals and families.

9.1 Participate in activities that demonstrate the concept of scarcity.

9.2 Distinguish between wants and needs.

9.3 Identify different types of work.

9.4 Participate in activities that require division of labor.

9.5 Identify some uses of money by individuals and families.

Grade 1 Competency Goals & Objectives (Home and School)

Goal 1: The learner will exhibit attributes of good citizenship in the classroom and school.

1.1 Participate constructively in school and classroom activities.
1.2 Participate in democratic decision making in the classroom.
1.3 Demonstrate personal responsibility in school activities.
1.4 Cooperate with and help others in classroom situations.

Goal 2: The learner will infer that individuals and families are alike and different.

2.1 Describe the roles of individuals in the family.
2.2 Distinguish similarities and differences among individuals and families.
2.3 Compare one's own family life with that of a child living in another culture.

Goal 3: The learner will analyze important social environments.

3.1 Identify social environments in homes and schools.
3.2 Compare social environments in homes and schools.
3.3 Describe and demonstrate appropriate behavior in various environments.

Goal 4: The learner will apply concepts of authority, responsibility, and justice to home and school settings.

4.1 Explain why certain individuals have authority.
4.2 Predict the consequences of responsible and irresponsible actions.
4.3 Elaborate on the need to apply rules fairly in the home, school, and community.

Goal 5: The learner will describe relationships between people and their governments.

5.1 Identify and elaborate on community services.

5.2 Distinguish those community services provided by governments.

5.3 Cite examples of people depending on governments and governments depending on people.

Goal 6: The learner will identify change in different settings.

6.1 Describe personal and family changes.

6.2 Recognize and describe changes in the classroom and school during the year.

6.3 Identify and describe changes outside the school environment.

Goal 7: The learner will elaborate on religious and other cultural traditions in the community.

7.1 Identify religious and secular symbols associated with famous people, holidays, and special days.

7.2 Participate in classroom activities associated with special days and holidays in the community and other countries.

7.3 Cite reasons for observing special days and religious and secular holidays.

Goal 8: The learner will apply basic geographic concepts.

8.1 Locate and describe familiar places in the home, classroom, and school.

8.2 Construct simple maps, models, and pictures representing home and school settings.

8.3 Identify the functions of places in homes and schools.

8.4 Analyze patterns of movement between homes and schools.

8.5 Demonstrate responsibility for the environment in classroom, school, and community settings.

Goal 9: The learner will apply basic economic concepts to home and school.

9.1 Participate in activities that demonstrate the concept of scarcity.

9.2 Distinguish between wants and needs.

9.3 Distinguish between goods and services.

9.4 Know that all families produce and consume goods and services.

9.5 Participate in activities that require division of labor.

9.6 Identify some uses of money by individuals and families.

Grade 2 Competency Goals & Objectives (Neighborhood and Local Community)

Goal 1: The learner will exhibit good citizenship in the classroom, school, neighborhood, and community.

1.1 Identify and describe attributes of good citizenship.

1.2 Demonstrate good citizenship in classroom and school actions.

1.3 Compare good citizenship in the classroom and school to neighborhood and community citizenship.

Goal 2: The learner will infer that individuals, families, and institutions in neighborhoods and communities are and have been alike and different.

2.1 Distinguish similarities and differences between one's self and other family members.

2.2 Describe similarities and differences among families in different neighborhoods and communities.

2.3 Distinguish similarities and differences among institutions in different neighborhoods and communities.

Goal 3: The learner will analyze multiple roles in families, workplaces, neighborhoods, and communities.

3.1 Identify multiple roles performed by children in their families, schools, and neighborhoods.

3.2 Describe multiple roles performed by children in other neighborhoods and communities.

3.3 Describe multiple roles performed by adults in neighborhoods and communities.

Goal 4: The learner will apply the concepts of authority, responsibility, and justice to democratic societies.

4.1 Suggest and justify rules and laws for neighborhoods and communities.

4.2 Suggest the consequences of not obeying rules and laws.

4.3 Describe the basic authority given to local elected officials.

4.4 Identify examples of responsible participation in neighborhoods and communities.

4.5 Evaluate fair and unfair procedures for dealing with neighborhood and community problems.

4.6 Distinguish aspects of the justice system evident in neighborhoods and communities.

Goal 5: The learner will evaluate relationships between people and their governments.

5.1 Identify government bodies and explain their functions in neighborhoods.

5.2 Cite examples of the elective process in the community.

5.3 Analyze how individuals and families depend on government services and how local governments depend on the support of citizens.

5.4 Identify examples of tax money being used in neighborhoods and communities.

Goal 6: The learner will evaluate change in neighborhoods and communities.

6.1 Identify examples of change in neighborhoods.

6.2 Analyze the effects of change in a given neighborhood or community.

6.3 Predict logical future changes.

Goal 7: The learner will analyze religious and other cultural traditions.

7.1 Identify religious and secular holidays observed in neighborhoods and communities.

7.2 Interpret religious and secular symbols used in neighborhoods and communities.

7.3 Elaborate on patriotic symbols and observances.

7.4 Identify selected famous people in history.

Goal 8: The learner will apply basic geographic concepts and terminology.

8.1 Describe uses of maps and globes.

8.2 Use geographic terms to describe landforms, bodies of water, weather, and climate.

8.3 Identify indigenous vegetation and animal life in neighborhoods.

Goal 9: The learner will apply geographic themes to neighborhoods.

9.1 Identify the absolute and relative location of neighborhoods.

9.2 Compare physical and human characteristics of neighborhoods.

9.3 Analyze human-environment interaction in the local and other neighborhoods.

9.4 Identify means and methods of human movement in the local and other neighborhoods.

9.5 Identify the extended regions of the local neighborhood and compare to regions of other neighborhoods.

Goal 10: The learner will apply basic economic concepts to neighborhoods.

10.1 Identify examples of scarcity in neighborhoods.

10.2 Distinguish between wants and needs.

10.3 Define income and identify different sources of income in neighborhoods.

10.4 Explain the use of money as a means of exchange.

10.5 Distinguish between goods produced and services provided in neighborhoods.

Goal 11: The learner will evaluate the uses of economic resources in different neighborhoods.

11.1 Identify economic resources in neighborhoods.

11.2 Describe the use of economic resources in neighborhoods.

11.3 Analyze the changing uses of a neighborhood's economic resources and predict logical future changes.

Resources

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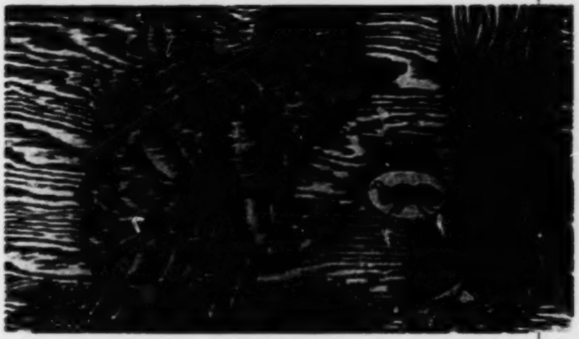
APPENDIX



Appendix Items

Health Screening Form A.3

Stages (Age-appropriate Behaviors) A.5

Emergent Literacy A.9

Classroom Learning Centers A.17

Floor Plans A.36

NC Preschool Guidelines for 3- & 4-Year Olds A.38

Sample Schedules A.39

Fostering Positive Attitudes Towards Persons with Disabilities A.44

Including Children with Autism .... A. 46

Including Children with Challenging Behaviors A.49

Including Children with Special Communication Needs A.55

Including Children with Hearing Loss A.60

Including Children with Visual Impairments .... A. 65

Including Children with Physical and/or Mental Disabilities A.70

Child Observation Record (COR) A.76

Work Sampling System Developmental Checklist A.78

Checklist Grid A.82

Preschool Transition/Placement Committee A.83

Issues in Early Childhood Education A.89

PPS-2K Rev. 9/96

KINDERGARTEN HEALTH ASSESSMENT REPORT

(Approved by North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources)

I. PERSONAL DATA (*TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENT OR GUARDIAN*)

'ease Print Clearly)

Child's Name ______________________ ______________________ ______________
Last *First* *Middle*

Birthdate: __ __/__ __/__ __ *mo. day year*

Sex: ☐ 1 Male ☐ 2 Female

Race: ☐ 1 White ☐ 2 Black ☐ 3 Am. Indian ☐ 4 Other

Hispanic: ☐ 1 Yes ☐ 2 No

County of Residence: ______________________ Zip Code: _ _ _ _ _

School your child will be attending ______________________________

Place where your child gets regular health care: *(Check one)*

☐ 1 Health Department
☐ 2 Emergency Room/Hospital
☐ 3 Community Health Center
☐ 4 Private Doctor/HMO
☐ 5 Other ______________
☐ 6 No Regular Place

List health problems that might affect your child's performance in school: ______________________
____
____

II. HEALTH ASSESSMENT (*TO BE COMPLETED BY HEALTH CARE PROVIDER*)

The health assessment must be conducted by a physician licensed to practice medicine, a physician's assistant as defined in General Statute 90-18, a certified nurse practitioner, or a public health nurse meeting the State standards for Health Check Services.

Date of Assessment: __ __/__ __/__ __ *mo. day year*

Are all immunizations complete at this time? ☐ 1 Yes ☐ 2 No
(Complete immunization history on reverse side)

Weight: _____ lbs. Weight relative to height is: ☐ 1 Normal ☐ 2 Underweight ☐ 3 Overweight

Height: _____ ft. _____ in. **Blood Pressure:** _______/_______

Vision:

	R	L	Both
Far	20/	20/	20/

Hearing:

	500	1000	2000	4000
R				
L				

With Glasses: ☐ 1 Yes ☐ 2 No

Needs Follow-Up: ☐ 1 Yes ☐ 2 No

Pure Tone: ______ dB level (usually 20 dB)

With Hearing Aid: ☐ 1 Yes ☐ 2 No

Needs Follow-Up: ☐ 1 Yes ☐ 2 No

Development: ☐ 1 Within Normal Range ☐ 2 Needs Follow-up

Test(s) used (optional) ______________________

Hematocrit: _______ %
OR
Hemoglobin: _______ gm/dl

☐ 1 Within Normal Range
☐ 2 Needs Follow-up

Illnesses or Developmental Problems *(Please check any of the following that the child has)*:

☐ 1 Asthma
☐ 2 Bleeding Problems
☐ 3 Bone/Muscle Problems
☐ 4 Bowel Problems
☐ 5 Cancer/Leukemia
Attention/Learning
☐ 7 Convulsions/Seizures
☐ 8 Cystic Fibrosis
☐ 9 Cerebral Palsy
☐ 10 Dental Problems
☐ 11 Diabetes
☐ 12 Emotional/Behavioral
☐ 13 Ear Infections
☐ 14 Heart Problems
☐ 15 Hearing Problems
☐ 16 Meningitis
☐ 17 Sickle Cell Anemia
☐ 18 Vision Problems
☐ 19 Skin Problems
☐ 20 Speech Problems
☐ 21 Stomach Aches
☐ 22 Urinary/Bladder
☐ 23 Other ______________
☐ 24 NONE

For those illnesses or developmental problems checked above, please provide additional information on the reverse side.

III. IMMUNIZATION RECORD (*TO BE COMPLETED ONLY BY HEALTH CARE PROVIDER*)

Enter date of EACH dose – Mo/Day/Year

VACCINE	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5
DTP, DTaP, DT					
Polio					
Hib					
Hepatitis B					
MMR					
Measles					
Mumps					
Rubella					
Varicella					

Exemptions from N.C. State Immunization Law require that a statement must be on file at school in student's permanent record. Exemptions must meet requirements of the law. Consult your local health department.

☐ Medical ☐ Religious Exemption

STATE LAW REQUIRES THE FOLLOWING MINIMUM DOSES:

5 DTP, DTaP, DT doses (if 4th dose is after 4th birthday, 5th dose is not required.)

4 POLIO VACCINE doses (if 3rd dose is after 4th birthday, 4th dose is not required.)

1 Hib dose – At least 1 Hib on/after 1st birthday and before 5 years of age. (Not required after age 5)

2 MMR doses (1st dose on/after 1st birthday)

IV. FURTHER HEALTH INFORMATION (*TO BE COMPLETED BY HEALTH CARE PROVIDER*)

Please provide additional information about illnesses or developmental problems checked on the reverse side. Also, provide information about any other important health conditions.

In your opinion, will any of the above illnesses or conditions affect the child's performance in school? If so, specify:

What specialized care is the child receiving related to these problems?

List any allergies that the child has (e.g., food, insect stings, medicine, etc.):

What type of allergic reaction occurs?

Does this child take medication on a regular basis? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, list medication, dose, and possible side effects.

Does this medication need to be given at school? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, list frequency and duration:

Does this child need a special diet? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, specify modifications:

Please list any additional medical care that is indicated for this child at this time:

Signature of Health Care Provider Date:

Address: Phone No.:

Age Appropriate Behaviors: Listening

Preconventional	Early Emergent	Emergent	Developing
Typical 3-4 year olds	**Typical 4-5 year olds**	**Typical 5-6 year olds**	**Typical 6-7 year olds**
• Listens briefly in individual and group settings • Wants to talk and be listened to • Listens attentively to stories, poems, music rhymes, etc., for short time periods • Follows directions during classroom routines • Focuses on own needs when listening	• Reacts to stories and songs • Listens attentively to stories, poems, rhymes, music • Follows directions that involve 2 or 3 steps • Responds to questions • Hears sounds and uses actions simultaneously in action songs • Listens and maintains attention for increasing periods	• Recognizes rhyming words and begins to develop phonemic awareness • Hears initial and final sounds in words • Allows others to speak without interruption • Follows directions that involve a series of steps • Can express the main point of a conversation • Waits for an appropriate turn to speak	• Asks questions and offers personal anecdotes that are relevant to a topic • Hears initial, middle, and final sounds in words • Summarizes what has been said • Makes predictions • Asks speaker to repeat what has been said for understanding and clarity

300

Age Appropriate Behaviors: Speaking

Preconventional	**Early Emergent**	**Emergent**	**Developing**
Typical 3-4 year olds	**Typical 4-5 year olds**	**Typical 5-6 year olds**	**Typical 6-7 year olds**
• Talks about daily experiences • Speech focuses on desired social and material outcomes • Links words and phrases, but may or may not use complete sentences • Communicates non-verbally (gestures, eye contact, nodding, etc.) or using one-to-two word answers or simple phrases • Asks what unfamiliar words mean	• Uses more complex sentences • Talks about common activities • Begins to recognize social conventions of speech • Seeks and shares information and appreciation during social interactions • Contributes information about familiar topics using complete sentences • Retells stories or events in chronological order	• Displays increased ability to adjust language and syntax to different situations • Expresses personal ideas and feelings on topics of interest • Initiates conversations with peers • Speaks at appropriate rate and volume for situation • Uses talk to clarify ideas or experiences	• Expresses personal ideas, feelings, information, and experiences • Discusses a variety of topics • Expands vocabulary • Speaks fluently in small group and/or large group setting • Communicates effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences • Uses words to convey meaning, entertain others or share information

Age Appropriate Behaviors: Writing

Preconventional	Early Emergent	Emergent	Developing
Typical 3-4 year olds	**Typical 4-5 year olds**	**Typical 5-6 year olds**	**Typical 6-7 year olds**
• Begins to use writing materials • Repeats the same marks over and over • Scribbles and attempts to write • Scribbles and tells what was written • Writes a few letters, perhaps own name	• Tries to copy words • Begins to have a sense of directionality • Dictates captions, words, stories • Uses letter-like forms or random letters to write messages • Realizes that marks look different and can have different meanings • Writes name and a few letters • "Reads" own writing	• Can use some familiar words to communicate in writing • Labels pictures using letters or known words like *cat* or *dad* • May or may not leave spaces between words • Uses upper and lower case letters • Understands that writing conveys meaning • Retells stories or experiences using pictures and strings of letters • Thinks of self as a writer • Initiates writing for personal communication • Draws and writes signs, labels, and notes • Copies printing from things in the environment • Matches some letters, usually first and last letters, to sounds when writing	• Writes simple repetitive sentences • Spells some words correctly • Makes up spelling for some words that other people can read • Uses more consistent letter spacing • Writes stories with beginnings, middles, and endings • Uses writing for a variety of purposes including lists, captions, stories, notes, and signs • Usually uses upper and lower case letters appropriately • Writes sentences using different grammatical forms and structures • Writes multiple sentences about the same topic • Experiments with punctuation • Begins to use descriptive words to add details • Can keep a personal journal or log

Age Appropriate Behaviors: Spelling

Precommunicative	Semi-phonetic	Phonetic	Transitional	Towards correct spelling
• Strings letters and numbers together demonstrating some knowledge of the alphabet • Possesses no knowledge of letter/sound correspondence • May not know left-to-right directionality • May include symbols as part of the word • Uses upper and lower case letters interchangeably	• Begins to use visual memory to spell some words conventionally (Mom, Dad) • Uses one, two, or three letters to represent a word • Begins to use letter/sound correspondences • Uses letters to represent words with or without spacing • Often begins words with initial consonants • Often uses letter name strategies • Begins to grasp left-to-right progression • May not be aware of word segmentation	• Grasps letter/sound correspondences • May represent essential sounds in words • May be consistent in writing specific sounds with specific letters • May substitute incorrect letters with similar sounds • May omit nasal consonants • May add an incorrect vowel after a correct vowel • May represent past tense in different ways • May represent syllable with the letter("r" when the word contains in the syllable) • Clearly defines word segmentation and separation	• Uses vowels in every syllable • Uses nasals before consonants • Inserts vowel before the "r" at the end of the word • Adheres to basic conventions of English spellings • Uses more conventionally spelled words in writing • Spells a greater percentage of words conventionally • Attempts to use rules • Uses vowel digraphs and consonants blends • Spells inflectional endings correctly (-s,-'s,-ing,-est)	• Usually occurs around age 8 or 9 • Demonstrates knowledge of prefixes, suffixes, compound words, and silent consonants • Gains knowledge of generalizations and uses them in new situations •Masters uncommon spelling patterns in words with irregular spellings • Recognizes incorrect spellings and can suggest alternatives • Spells large body of words automatically and fluently

from *Teaching Kids to Spell.* J. Richard Genrty and Jean W. Gillet. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books. 1993.

My Kid Can't Spell. J Richard Gentry. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books. 1996.

Emergent Literacy

[The English Language Arts Standard Course of Study adopted by the State Board of Education in 1997 defines Emergent Literacy and suggests strategies. It is included with the North Carolina Guide for the Early Years especially for kindergarten and first grade teachers.]

The process of literacy begins much earlier than was previously believed, with early contact with print (for example, soft alphabet blocks, books, legos, etc.) serving as a basis for a lifelong learning process. Also, literacy is now regarded as a social and a linguistic process, rather than merely a cognitive skill to be learned.

The importance of emergent literacy is indicated by the following research: IQ, mental age, race, parents' levels of education, left or right handedness, and perceptual styles are weak predictors of children's reading success. Rather, these factors of emergent literacy are heavily correlated with later reading success:

- Print awareness (knowledge of print)
- Alphabetic knowledge (graphophonic symbols/sounds)
- Phonemic awareness (linguistic awareness of words, syllables, phonemes) (Diamond and Mandel, 1996).

Both direct instruction and extended exploration of these concepts in real reading and writing are necessary for developing emergent literacy. However, different children will require different levels of direct instruction, with some children needing more explicit instruction and more repeated experiences. Children who are not already reading and who cannot successfully decode need phonemic awareness, explicit instruction in the fundamental sound-letter associations, and opportunity to practice in text that they can decode and that is at an individually appropriate level of difficulty. Meanwhile, read-alouds and guided reading sessions should be maintained to ensure ample experience with meaningful, rich literacy and language.

Research in emergent literacy indicates the following important points:

- Literacy development begins early in life, long before formal instruction.
- The functions of literacy (how reading and writing are used in real life situations to accomplish various goals) are an integral part of the learning process.
- Reading and writing are interrelated and develop together.
- Children learn about written language through active engagement in reading, writing, and discussion with others.
- Children should be helped to understand skills and strategies through direct instruction.
- To help children internalize skills and strategies as an integral part of reading and writing processes, they should be practiced within a meaningful context.
- Progress should be monitored by ongoing, multiple observations and analysis of reading behaviors and writing samples as children engage in reading and writing meaningful, connected text *(The Primary Program: Growing and Learning in the Heartland,* 1993).

Print awareness is an important foundation for students' learning how to read. "[C]hildren should possess a broad, general appreciation of the nature of print. They should be aware of how printed material can look and how it works; that its basic meaningful units are specific, speakable words; and that its words are comprised of letters. Of equal importance, they should have a solid sense of the various functions of print—to entertain, inform, communicate, record—and of the potential value of each of these functions to their own lives. To learn to read, a child must learn first what it means to read and that she or he would like to be able to do so" (Adams, 1990). While some children come to school with extended knowledge of print, other children do not; teachers of young children need to assess what each child knows about print and make sure that each child acquires the print awareness he/she needs for success in reading.

Ways to teach print awareness include:

- Teach book concepts and print concepts through demonstrations as part of shared reading and shared writing.
- Use teacher demonstrations/direct instruction with individual students.
- Use teacher modeling to demonstrate book and print concepts such as the concepts that words can be spoken or written and that print corresponds to speech.
- Provide language activities that develop listening and expressive skills (e.g., listening to stories, poems, and expository texts; telling and retelling stories; enacting stories; discussing word meanings, ideas, books, and experiences; etc.).
- Provide a classroom full of print that is varied and meaningful to students (e.g., lists of birthdays and chores, labels on possessions and seat assignments, etc.). Such printed materials could be accessible to students as they go about the reading/writing routines of the day.

- Teach page arrangement, story grammar, and directionality of print with repeated readings and modeling with big books.
- Write students' words (what they say) for teacher and students to read aloud.

Letter Knowledge To help young children learn to recognize and print upper- and lower-case letters, the following activities are recommended:

- Familiarize students with the alphabet by teaching them alphabet songs and poems, such as the ABC song.
- Play letter recognition games to help them learn to recognize both upper- and lower-case letters.
- Teach students to print their own names and expect them to label their work regularly.
- Play games that teach the children to pair upper- and lower-case forms of each letter.
- Assist students in learning to print the letters with tactile, kinesthetic mediums such as magnetic and sandpaper letters.
- Give students ample and regular opportunity to print the letters of the alphabet using the large motor skills (writing in sand, fingerpaint, salt, or rice or writing on the chalkboard) as well as the small motor movements.

Phonemic awareness is the insight that words and syllables are themselves comprised of strings of still smaller sounds, the phonemes. In principle, phonemes are the speech sounds that correspond to letters in an alphabetic language. For this reason, an awareness of phonemes is essential to making sense of the logic of our writing system.

Phonemic awareness is difficult and should be developed in progressive stages. It includes segmenting and blending, and children need to do both (Fox, 1996). To foster children's awareness of phonemes, engage them in games that encourage word play-rhyming, blending, segmenting, and all manner of play with the initial, final, and medial sounds of words. To complement activities that are specifically designed for developing phonemic awareness, find ways to direct the students' attention to the sounds of words in their daily interactions with language print.

Research indicates that poor phonemic awareness is a major underlying cause of specific reading difficulties. In order to make sure that lack of phonemic awareness can be detected and corrected before it causes reading problems, teachers should take full advantage of diverse assessment strategies.

Ways to teach phonemic awareness include:

- Gradually move from larger, easier phonological insights to smaller, more subtle ones.
- Share stories, poems, songs, and dances that play with language sounds and patterns.
- Engage the children in games that combine phonemic play with meaning, e.g., "I see something yellow whose name begins with /m/."
- Engage the children in games that encourage word play and rhyming.
- Engage the children in games that encourage blending of syllables and phonemes.

- Engage the children in games that encourage segmenting of initial, final, and medial phonemes.
- Foster attention on sound elements with words by clapping syllables, manipulating magnetic letters, and manipulating tokens to match sounds or to match sounds during slow word articulation.
- Engage students in segmenting activities such as tapping and counting sounds in words and using a rubber band to illustrate how to segment words into sounds.
- Engage children in blending activities, for example, the use of visuals such as a slide to illustrate how sounds are blended together during pronunciation.
- Carefully monitor and assess the growth of each child's phonemic awareness.

Alphabetic Principle

In the later stages of Emergent Literacy and as a bridge into the Developing Literacy stage, children should begin to understand the basic alphabetic principle: The letters of written words represent the phonemes of spoken words. Phonemic awareness and letter knowledge are prerequisites to understanding the alphabetic principle, but they are not quite enough. Instruction is also warranted on how the relations between letters and sounds are represented in print.

Research shows that children who have a basic understanding of the alphabetic principle generally move into the challenges of learning to read and write words with ease and confidence. In contrast, children without this basic understanding have great difficulty.

The purpose of teaching children the alphabetic principle and sound-letter relationships is that they will be able:

- In reading to form an approximate pronunciation that must be checked against their knowledge of real words and the context of the text.
- In writing to form an approximate spelling of a word and to move from phonemic or temporary to standard or conventional spelling.

The goal of alphabetic instruction is for readers to be able consistently to use information about the relationships between letters and sounds and letters and meanings to assist in the identification of known words and to figure out unfamiliar words independently.

The alphabetic principle can be taught in the following ways:

- Engage students with alphabet books, both commercial and student-made.
- Provide direct instruction on letter-sound correspondences using key-word displays.
- Create an environmental alphabet with materials brought from home (e.g., napkins, empty cereal boxes, place mats from fast-food restaurants, etc.).
- Encourage children to spell independently using their letter knowledge and phonemic awareness.
- Help children realize that the alphabetic principle applies not merely to the first letter and sound of a word but to letters and sounds in every position of a word.

- Play letter-sound games to help the children understand that the sequence of sounds in a word are represented, left-to-right, by the sequence of letters.
- Focus attention on letter-sound patterns through multisensory activities involving visual, auditory, and kinesthetic and tactile experiences.

Classroom Learning Centers

Descriptions of learning experiences and suggested materials for the following areas:

- Art
- Blocks
- Book & Listening
- Cooking
- Computers
- Dramatic Play
- Manipulatives
- Music & Movement
- Sand & Water
- Science & Discovery
- Stitchery & Weaving
- Topical Areas
- Woodworking
- Writing & Printing

Children need creative freedom to express ideas and feelings through a variety of visual art media. Creativity, expression, and originality are the goals of the art center, not producing a final product. Children learn that each person has different ideas and ways of working.

Learning opportunities

- Using small muscles
- Developing eye-hand coordination
- Using materials in a variety of creative ways
- Participating in individual, group projects
- Evaluating own work, work of others
- Expressing pride in own efforts
- Complimenting others' efforts
- Completing projects
- Discussing works with others
- Recognizing shapes, colors, sizes
- Combining several media into one project
- Demonstrating correct care, use of materials
- Assuming clean-up responsibility
- Experiencing the differences in textures of different material
- Demonstrating eye-hand coordination in the use of scissors, crayons, paints
- Demonstrating ability to draw, paint, build, mold, mix, tear, paste

Basic equipment

- Double-sided easels
- Tables as work surfaces, preferably with Formica tops
- Storage for art supplies—baskets, empty ice cream containers, shoe boxes
- Collections of magazines, newspapers, catalogs, wallpaper books, clean trash or beautiful junk, and bins for storage
- Clay/play dough
- Tools for use with clay—plastic knives, garlic press, cutters
- Large air-tight bins for clay
- Crayons
- Brushes, Paint—powder tempera, liquid tempera, water colors, fingerpaint
- Glue, paste
- Scissors, Hole punches
- Drawing, construction & easel paper
- Magic markers—assorted sizes, colors
- Collage box with an assortment of materials—buttons, beans, feathers, fabric scraps, cut-up greeting cards, yarn, glitter
- Sponges, pipe cleaners, paper plates, paper bags, chalk, newspaper, woodscraps, clothespins,
- Aprons, smocks
- Roll-on paint dispensers
- Work trays with 2" edges, or other adaptive materials for children with physical challenges such as cerebral palsy
- A variety of paper including fingerpainting paper, poster board, origami paper, construction paper, newsprint
- Self-inking stamps or stamps & stamp pads

Block building gives children opportunities to think, to play, and to solve problems while moving freely and working with the whole body. Building with blocks helps children begin to conceptualize size, shape, number, measurement, and balance. Children's language grows through interaction with other children and adults in the block center. To enhance this development children may draw pictures and write about buildings, make displays of structures, and share these with other children. For all this to happen in block play, children must have space to build. The block area should be the largest area in the room and it should be away from the flow of traffic. This allows large structures to be left up for display or further work. It is also important to label where the blocks or props are stored by pasting a picture or silhouette of each type of block or prop on the shelf so children can return them to the proper place.

Learning opportunities

- Constructing various structures such as houses, schools, barns, bridges
- Demonstrating an understanding of safety concepts using vehicles and traffic signs
- Demonstrating an understanding of social concepts by role playing family situations
- Expressing feelings through role playing
- Developing an understanding of spatial relationships
- Developing fine motor skills (using small muscles)
- Developing language skills

Basic equipment

- Storage units for blocks—there should be adequate storage for all blocks and supplies, at least three shelves
- Plentiful supply of large, hollow blocks
- Unit blocks—a large set of between 500–750 blocks in a variety of shapes and sizes
- Sets of farm animals and zoo animal figures
- Cars, trucks, and other vehicles of different sizes
- Sets of community people and families of various ethnic groups
- Doll house furniture
- Landscaping pieces—bushes, trees, fences, boxes, boards, barrels, spools
- Baskets for storing props
- Writing/drawing materials to draw/label structures
- Tape measures, rulers
- Hats
- Puppets
- Notepad & pencil for sketching construction plans
- Camera for taking photos of block structures

Books & Listening

Adults who love books and read in front of the children help children develop an appreciation for books and reading. Looking at books, sharing books with others, listening to adults read books, listening to recordings of literature and songs, read-aloud and story-telling sessions enhance children's literacy development.

Learning opportunities

- Listening
- Discussing stories
- Role playing favorite stories or storybook characters
- Sharing books, equipment
- Handling books properly
- Identifying main ideas of stories
- Naming objects in stories/pictures
- Creating language experience stories
- Describing story sequences
- Interpreting what is read or heard
- Explaining what is read or heard
- Understanding function of printed word
- Understanding writing has purpose

Basic equipment

- Carpet, cushions, couch, chair, rocking chairs, pillows
- Books—picture, story, homemade, braille, extra large print, books on tape, books depicting a variety of cultural and gender roles—changed on a regular basis
- Display unit for books
- Record player, cassette recorder
- Records, cassettes—classical-traditional, vocal, stories, poetry
- Paper, pencils, crayons, felt pens, colored pencils
- Catalogs
- Cookbooks
- Magazines
- Maps
- Menus
- Flannel boards, flannel board stories and pieces, puppets
- Pictures reflecting the class make-up—race, gender, special needs, abilities, ages
- Magnifying book viewer
- Photos of the children

Cooking lets children experience the world of food firsthand by learning how it is prepared and how it contributes to health and well being. Include opportunities to learn about food, to be creative, and to prepare nutritional snacks. Many discoveries happen during cooking. Seeing bread rise may teach science concepts. Measuring milk to make pudding teaches measurement and volume. Peeling carrots, kneading bread dough, and cutting cookie dough develops physical as well as language skills. Making hummus teaches about nutritional snacks as well as other cultures. Completing a task like making cheese crackers teaches math skills and gives children a sense of accomplishment. Cooking appeals to the senses and provides learning opportunities in many areas—reading, math, social studies.

Learning opportunities

- Working cooperatively in small groups
- Developing self-help skills
- Completing a task
- Solving problems
- Developing beginning reading skills
- Developing math skills—addition, fractions, doubling
- Developing fine motor skills

Basic equipment

- Pots, pans of all sizes
- Cooking utensils
- Wok
- Measuring instruments
- Toaster ovens
- Hot plates or stove
- Refrigerator
- Sifter
- Hand juicer
- Hand mixer
- Graters
- Serving dishes
- Hot pads
- Aprons
- Disposable eating utensils—plates, napkins, forks, knives, spoons, chop sticks
- Bamboo steamer

Computers

Early childhood programs provide young children with appropriate settings to use computers and software. These early experiences with technology teach children that computers are fun, useful machines which make their world a more exciting and manageable place to live and work. For the child with disabilities, computers often provide a primary source of communication. When used appropriately, computers reinforce and extend learning while meeting individual needs of children. Children working on computers demonstrate many cooperative learning and problem-solving strategies.

Learning opportunities

- Identifying and sorting objects by attributes such as color, shape, and size
- Learning sequence and order
- Developing reading skills
- Understanding cause and effect relationships
- Extending creativity
- Working in pairs or small groups
- Taking responsibility for one's own work
- Developing perseverance
- Taking pride in accomplishments
- Developing small muscle skills
- Reinforcing eye-hand coordination
- Improving visual skills
- Following directions
- Developing language skills and concepts

Basic equipment

- One or more computers with appropriate software and adaptations
- Tables and chairs for monitors to be eye-level and keyboards to be elbow height
- Display space for children's work
- Storage for disks, CDs, manuals

Computers should be placed

- Out of line of traffic
- Where children can concentrate and talk
- With sufficient outlets to support equipment
- Within adult supervision

Dramatic Play

Dramatic play helps children learn to work and play with others. It enhances development of oral language. Drama gives opportunities to learn new words—orally and in writing—and becomes the basis for children's discussions that encourage comprehension and problem solving. Dramatic play provides meaningful opportunities to engage in early stages of writing—making greeting cards or grocery lists—and math—making sales receipts and tickets.

Learning opportunities

- Sharing
- Taking turns
- Organizing materials
- Acting out familiar home & community roles
- Learning to give and take
- Using correct utensils when eating
- Role playing—trip to grocery store, fixing the car
- Classifying materials such as fruits and vegetables
- Using money
- Expressing thoughts, feelings through role playing
- Developing language skills to communicate
- Using self help skills (zipping, buttoning)

Basic equipment

- Dolls—some with disabilities and from diverse cultures and ethnic groups
- Doll bed, clothes, carriages, car seat
- Play furniture—appropriately scaled sink, cupboard, stove, refrigerator
- Dress up clothes—male, female
- Racks for hanging clothes
- Fabric pieces used for creating characters
- Wall-mounted & hand mirrors
- Table, chairs, normal-sized dinnerware, plates, knives, forks, cups
- Cushions, carpet, drapes
- Telephone, directory
- Cooking utensils, pots, pans (props from different cultures: wok or tortilla press)
- Puppets, puppet stage/store front
- Calendar, magazines, newspapers, scratch pads, markers
- Cash register, play money
- Empty food cans, packages
- Doctor, nurse kits
- Cuddly toys
- Rocking chair
- Iron, ironing board
- Plastic/realistic foods
- Wheelchairs, walkers, crutches, eyeglass frames

Manipulatives provide opportunities to test problem-solving skills. Matching games let children see how things go together. Puzzles and peg boards give practice coordinating hand-eye movements. Simple number games help children learn the concepts and functions of numbers.

Learning opportunities

- Developing self-help skills: buttoning, lacing, snapping, tying, sorting, classifying
- Developing visual and other sensory discrimination skills
- Developing ability to construct
- Improving fine motor skills
- Developing problem solving skills

Basic equipment

- Puzzles, puzzle rack—include puzzles with knobs, textures for children with disabilities
- Pounding bench
- Matching games
- Lacing board
- Table blocks, games
- Tinker toys
- Beads, string
- Button, zip, snap boards
- Counting objects
- Sorting boards/games
- Legos®/Duplos® building sets
- Playing cards
- Variety of cards—opposites, rhyming, half-to-whole matching
- Dominoes
- Lotto games
- Pegboards, pegs
- Nesting toys
- Construction sets
- Small items to match
- Worktrays with raised edges—critical for chidren with visual impairments

Music & Movement

Children use their bodies and voices and learn expression through music. They learn to hear differences in sounds, rhythm, and pitch, and to respond with various creative movements. Every child can participate in music to some degree—some by moving, jumping, clapping and others with small body movements or gleams in their eyes.

Learning opportunities

- Enjoying various forms of music
- Interpreting rhythms, moods
- Moving rhythmically
- Using rhythm instruments to keep time
- Expressing emotions
- Singing songs
- Clapping or tapping beats
- Relaxing
- Handling instruments with care
- Hearing differences in pitch, tone
- Using materials for making instruments
- Participating in musical games
- Identifying loudness/softness
- Developing motor skills

Basic equipment

- Large carpeted area for relaxing or moving
- Record player, records—various cultures, types
- Cassette recorder, cassettes—various cultures, types
- Rhythm instruments from many cultures
- Piano or autoharp
- Homemade instruments—drums, sticks, dried gourds
- Materials for making instruments
- Guitar
- Recorders, tonettes
- Jump ropes, hula hoops
- Parachute
- Tumbling mats
- Beach balls
- Collection of materials for exploring sound
- Collection of scarves
- Beanbags

Sand & Water

Experiences with water and sand are important for young children. Through guided experiences and by trial and error, they develop math and science concepts. They learn health and safety rules and how to take turns. They have fun.

Learning Opportunities

- Observing materials to see comparisons
- Observing cause/effect relationships—playing cooperatively with others
- Observing conservation of volume
- Developing problem-solving skills
- Strengthening coordination, fine motor control
- Recording information
- Observing changes
- Measuring
- Developing motor skills
- Developing language skils

Basic equipment

- Sand table on floor or at suitable table-top height (Make sure your table is accessible to children in wheel chairs.)
- Different grades of sand for texture exploration
- Dry grits (They soften when they get in children's eyes.)
- Beans, rice, macaroni
- Small cars, trucks, highway signs, miniature community people, construction equipment
- Plastic animals
- Utensils
- Containers of various sizes, shapes, materials
- Water tub made of transparent, heavy-duty plastic (Empty and clean tub at least daily.)
- Liquid detergent for making bubbles
- Soap
- Straws
- String
- Large, flat trays for soap solutions
- Funnels, sponges, corks
- Boats, egg beaters, cup
- Tempera paint, food coloring
- Plastic wading pool
- Coffee pot
- Squirt bottles
- Sand wheel
- Clipboards with markers and paper for recording findings
- Storage shelves with silhouettes

Always encourage children to ask questions, to look for answers, and to become aware of what is happening in the environment. An explorations area—including a table to display various collections—shows children their personal interests are important to others. Caring for pets and growing plants offer new experiences to think about and new things to try as well as developing respect for the environment and a sense of responsibility. Provide children with interesting materials for observing, sorting, patterning, comparing, and measuring. Develop activities that focus on concept development.

Learning opportunities

- Examining real objects—stones, leaves, fossils, shells
- Conducting various experiments
- Exploring properties of materials
- Discussing experiences with others
- Demonstrating proper care of animals, plants
- Participating in group projects
- Classifying objects, events
- Expanding vocabulary by describing properties of things seen
- Participating in experiments
- Observing, reporting findings
- Collecting objects, information needed for experiments
- Comparing objects, events
- Questioning observations
- Counting
- Measuring distance and objects
- Weighing objects
- Estimating
- Using curiosity
- Developing inquiry skills

Basic equipment

- Weights, scales, spring balance, balance scale
- Materials for balancing, weighing—shells, bottle tops, buttons, rocks, washers, popsicle sticks, pine cones, ears of corn, rice
- Non-standard measuring materials—ribbon, string, popsicle sticks, large paper clips
- Measuring utensils—cups, jugs, spoons
- Funnels, tubes, cans, sieves, buckets, dishes
- Large clock, play clocks
- Large, small colored wooden beads
- Egg timers
- Colored cubes, mosaic shapes, counters, attribute pieces
- Magic markers, pencils, glue, scissors, paper to record observations
- Aquarium, terrarium, incubator
- Animals—frogs, turtles, grasshoppers, crickets, beetles, guinea pigs, hamsters, and others from the everyday world
- Microscope, large & small magnifying glasses
- Small mirrors, flashlights, large prisms
- Magnets—variety of shapes and strengths
- Materials that magnets attract
- Pulleys, simple machines
- Jars and plastic bags for specimen collection
- Plants, seeds, gardening tools
- Rocks, sea shells, nests
- Thermometer, weather board
- Materials to dismantle—old toys, clocks, pencil sharpeners—and screwdrivers

Stitchery & Weaving

Children love to watch stitching or weaving take form and shape through their own efforts. Small muscle development, spatial concept development—over, under, through, in between, long, short—and opportunities for problem-solving come naturally from these art forms.

Learning opportunities

- Refining hand-eye coordination
- Learning directionality
- Creating patterns
- Enhancing creativity
- Experiencing pride
- Increasing sense of touch
- Developing self-discipline

Basic equipment

- Collections of fabric scraps
- Gutter guard cut into small pieces
- Large needles (both plastic & metal with blunt points)
- Burlap pieces
- Hole punch
- Scissors
- Fabric strips
- Weaving frames (large & small paper, wood with chicken wire or hardware cloth, plastic, forked branches, six-pack rings tied together to make a frame)
- Yarn
- Beads, buttons, feathers

Topical Centers

Topical centers focus on units, special projects, or concept activities and materials. The possibilities are limitless—shoes, seeds, babies, bumpy things, leaves, heavy things, small things, round things, red things, holidays. Select a topic because of a particular child's experience, such as a trip to the beach or zoo—or focus on a holiday or special event. At other times choose a concept or topic of general interest. Plan this area to include things to see and things to manipulate and explore.

Learning opportunities

- Matching
- Comparing
- Identifying
- Sorting
- Counting
- Appreciating all cultures
- Making connections to personal experiences—"I've got one of these at home!"
- Learning language skills

Basic equipment

- Real objects
- Pictures
- Non-standard measuring materials (ribbons, popsicle sticks)
- Balance scales
- Books
- Display of children's art work related to the topic
- Labels

Woodworking & Carpentry

When children use tools, their hands and eyes have to work together; they use their muscles; and they have to solve problems. Woodworking extends mathematical concepts, observation skills, and oral language. Station the woodworking area out of the line of traffic. Use carpet under the wood to minimize noise. Provide only two of each tool, so children can see that only two people can use this area. Store and label each tool's space on a pegboard to show that organization is important.

Learning opportunities

- Developing problem-solving skills
- Developing planning skills
- Using tools, equipment safely & appropriately
- Expressing creativity
- Naming tools, equipment used in woodworking
- Learning to channel frustration, anger in a socially acceptable way
- Math skills—measuring, halves, doubles
- Developing fine motor skills
- Developing eye-hand coordination

Basic equipment

- Sturdy tool rack—mobile, if possible
- Workbench or a low, old, fairly heavy table
- Vise, wrench, pliers
- Saws, hammers, hand drills, screwdrivers
- Sandpaper
- Soft, hard woods
- Nails, nuts, assorted bolts
- Log for hammering on, into
- Tempera, poster paint
- Paintbrushes
- Safety goggles
- Paper, pencils, markers to make signs, draw plans
- Hard hats
- Tape measures, rulers
- Styrofoam pieces, golf tees, wooden mallets for beginners

Writing & Printing

Children expand their perceptions of writing as they experience and experiment with functions and forms of written language. Encourage and enhance their endeavors. Given opportunities and materials, children can produce labels, lists, cards, letters, stories and books. These early efforts provide clear pictures of children's understanding of print.

Learning opportunities

- Using print for a purpose—grocery lists, writing letters to friends
- Understanding that print conveys a message
- Connecting reading to writing
- Developing hand-eye coordination
- Developing small muscle control

Basic equipment

- Table for work surface
- Shelving for supplies
- Chart paper, newsprint, drawing paper, construction paper, notepads, blank books, index cards, stationery, envelopes, greeting cards, adding machine tape, order forms
- Lead, colored pencils
- Scissors
- Felt tip, ball point pens
- Crayons, chalk
- Hole punch
- Yarn, ribbon, string
- Alphabet books, cards
- Dictionaries—child-made, commercial
- Shapes for tracing
- Stapler, staples
- Stamp pad, stamps
- Scotch tape
- Art gum
- Glue
- Small chalkboard
- Typewriter
- Computer, printer

Outdoor Areas

Outdoor play is fun for young children and important for their growth and development. The outside provides rich places for learning—it may have an open grassy space, a concrete or blacktop area for tricycles, shade, sunny garden spaces, sand and water play areas, pet spaces, and many places for children to explore. When planning for play areas, provide a variety of equipment and materials for many children rather than one large all-purpose structure for all children.

In the outdoor environment, children can climb, skip, run, hop, use outside voices, throw, catch, stretch, breathe fresh air, and just enjoy the beauty and freedom of the outside space. What goes on outdoors, however, is far more than just physical activity. Outdoor environments provide unique places for many experiences. Science comes alive! Gardening projects, seasonal changes, observing insects, birds and other wildlife provide ways for young children to experience science in a hands-on way. Art, music, reading, dramatic play, woodworking, and caring for pets can all take place outdoors.

Just as you spend time planning and organizing indoor space to ensure activities that promote growth and learning, invest careful thought and planning in the outdoor environment. Let the outdoor environment be an extension of your classroom. Take prop boxes outside for additional play experiences. Use time spent playing on a climbing structure as an opportunity for language and concept development and experiences with cooperation. Regardless of its shape and size, any outside area can be a setting for young children's learning.

Learning opportunities

Increasing gross motor skills—jumping, twisting, bending, and balancing
Problem-solving
Taking informed risks
Taking turns
Expanding the imagination
Increasing communication skills through play
Acting out home & community experiences
Exploring nature

Basic equipment

- Balance beams
- Arch ladders
- Suspension bridges
- Ramps
- Tunnels
- Short sliding bars
- Slides
- Wind chimes to identify areas for children with visual impairments
- Spring rockers
- Platforms
- Conventional swings
- Tire swings
- Chinning bars
- Stairways, stepladders
- Climbers
- Adaptive equipment—built-in corner chairs on sandboxes, raised sandbox, swings that support children with low muscle tone
- Movable parts such as tires, hollow blocks, planks, crates

digging & pouring area

- Sandbox
- Outside water source
- Containers for pouring, measuring, sifting
- Sand toys, shovels, sand wheels

riding area

- Hard riding surface—blacktop or concrte
- Tricycles, wagons, scooters

quiet place area

- Crayons, paper, and chalk
- Books
- Tape recorders and tapes
- Paints, easels
- Quiet game boards with large pieces
- Playhouse or other type of structure for dramatic play
- Locate your quiet outdoor areas in the shade so children can cool off. This area might include a picnic table under a tree or a blanket in a grassy area so that children can be comfortable.

garden area

- Garden plot
- Large pots or old tires to define plant areas
- Garden tool sets
- Wheelbarrow
- Seeds, plants
- Access to water
- Children enjoy growing flowers or vegetables to eat. Locate the garden area away from the traffic flow.

pet area

- Pets, such as rabbits or guinea pigs that live outside the center in hutches, are great for children to experience the responsibility of owning a pet.

woodworking area

- Workbench
- Tools—hammers, saws, safety goggles, screwdrivers, mallets
- Soft wood scraps
- Nails with large heads, golf tees
- Sandpaper

Remember these important safety concerns. Check all equipment daily for needed repairs. Clear fall zones around climbing structures and equipment . The height of structures should be age appropriate. Ensure all children accessibility to all outdoor areas with approved ground covers of grass, mulch, gravel, sand. Place swings in an area out of the flow of traffic, and make sure trash and other hazzards are removed!

Props

Is there an area in your room that hasn't been used lately? Do children seem bored with the centers? You may need to change, re-arrange, or add to the learning centers. Adding new props may help. Collecting and storing theme-related materials in prop boxes make changes quicker and simpler.

Cover empty computer boxes or copier paper boxes with contact paper to give a neat, uniform appearance. Label each box and list the contents. If space is a critical problem, stack prop boxes two high to create a divider between centers. Use creativity and imagination to extend your collections and the ways children use them.

General office

- Paper, pads of paper
- Typewriter
- Computer
- Adding machine
- Desk accessories–pen holder, plastic/paper files, memo holder
- Pens, pencils
- Posters/pictures of office workers
- File folders
- Stapler
- Hole punches
- Tape, tape dispenser
- Stamps, envelopes
- Phone
- Pads of forms
- Receipt books
- Magnets for memos

Veterinarian clinic

- Eyedroppers
- Empty pill bottles
- Clipboard
- Disposable masks
- Stethoscope
- Pet-care papers
- Hospital smocks
- Pictures of veterinarians at work
- Phone, message pads
- Office signs
- Latex gloves
- Grooming items
- Cloth bandages
- Small stuffed animals
- Adhesive tape
- Pet carriers

Repair shop

- Scrapwood
- Safety goggles
- Gloves
- Phone
- Hard hats
- Nuts, bolts
- Oil can
- Pictures of mechanics at work
- Screwdrivers
- Clipboards
- Penlights
- Wrench
- Toolbox
- Vice grip
- Measuring tape, rulers

How about a...

sports-shop with sporting goods items

doctor/nurse similar to the veterinarian with uniforms, bandaids, crutches

dentist like the doctor's office with false teeth molds, plastic mirrors

shoe store with shoes and boxes

School

- Paper
- Pencils
- Pictures of teachers working
- Write-on boards
- Self-inking stamps
- Schoolbooks
- Magic markers
- Chalk, chalkboard
- Notebooks
- Eraser

Gas station

- Cash register, play money
- Assorted tools, tire pump, lug wrench
- Car seat
- Oil cans, rags
- Large box decorated like a car
- Phone, message pads
- Posters from local garage, tire store
- Work clothes, caps
- Paper towels
- Steering wheel
- Hose or tubing
- Penlights
- Squeegee
- Toolbox

Beach party

- Inner tubes, beach balls
- Umbrellas
- Wading pool
- Swim suits
- Plastic fish
- Beach towels
- Sunglasses
- Empty tanning lotion bottles
- Hawaiian leis
- Fishing poles
- Straw hats

Flower shop

- Flower/garden magazines, pictures, posters of flowers
- Plastic flowers
- Styrofoam squares
- Aprons
- Small garden tools
- Vases, baskets
- Cash register, play money
- Empty seed packets
- Empty watering can
- Garden hats, gloves
- Phone, message pads

Jewelry/accessories

- Rings, earrings, bracelets, necklaces, watches
- Small mirrors
- Jewelry boxes
- Eyeglasses
- Sunglasses

Bakery

- Cookie sheets
- Bowls
- Large spoons
- Phone, message pads
- Play dough
- Picture of bakers and baked goods
- Cupcake paper cups
- Measuring spoons, cups
- Rolling pins
- Aprons/hot pads
- Spatula
- Baking tins, pans
- Empty food, milk, and spice containers
- Index cards, markers

Grocery store

- Plastic foods, empty food boxes, cans
- Adding machine
- Aprons
- Pictures of grocery food items
- Grocery receipt slips
- Cash register, play money
- Grocery bags, baskets
- Coupons

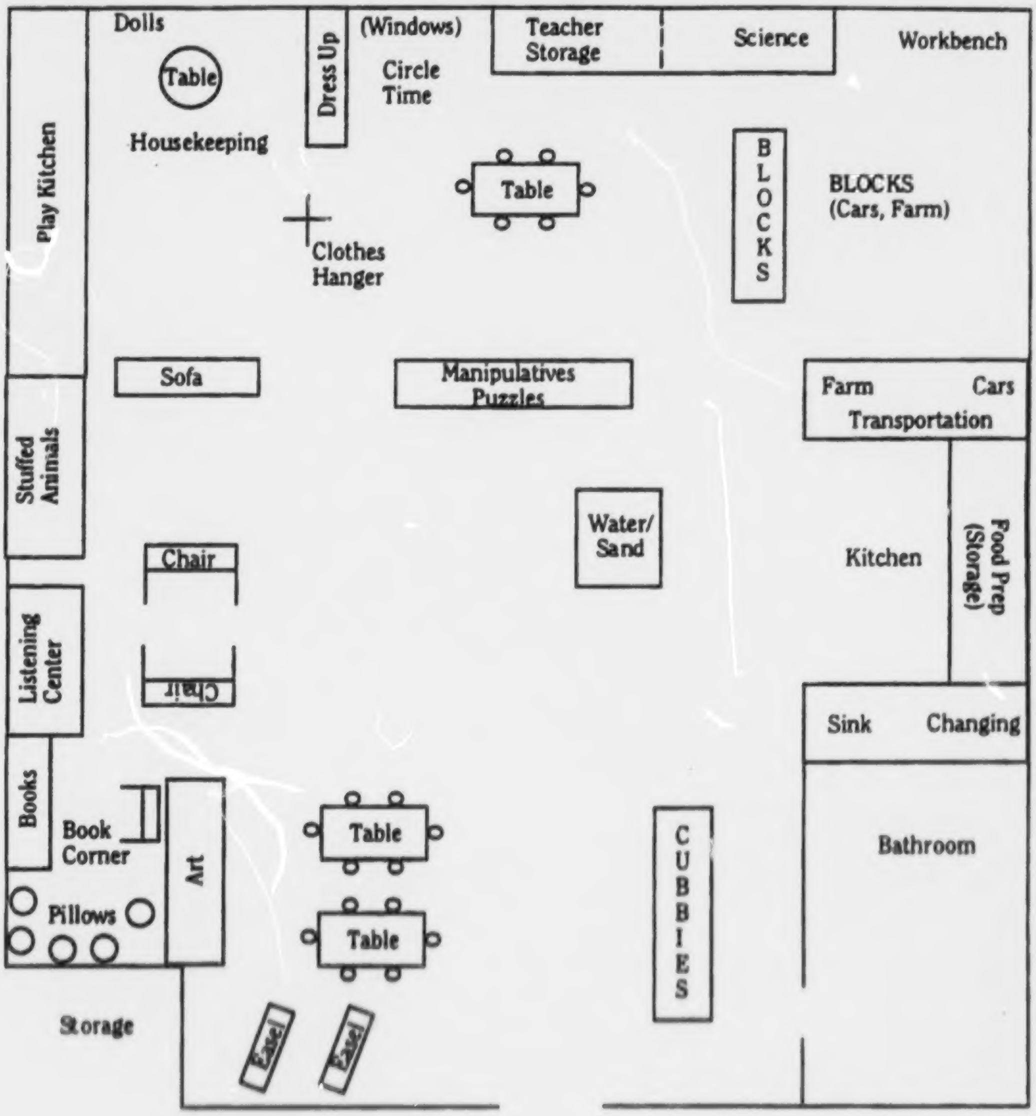
Hair salon

- Hairdresser smocks
- Towels
- Curling iron
- Shampoo bottles
- Hair styling books
- Phone, message pads
- Clipboard
- Appointment book
- Plastic drapes to cover clothing
- Perm, regular rollers
- Bobbie pins
- Brushes, combs
- Hair dryer with no cord
- Magazines
- Empty spray bottles
- Mirrors
- Wigs
- Ribbons, hair bows, headbands

Fast food restaurant

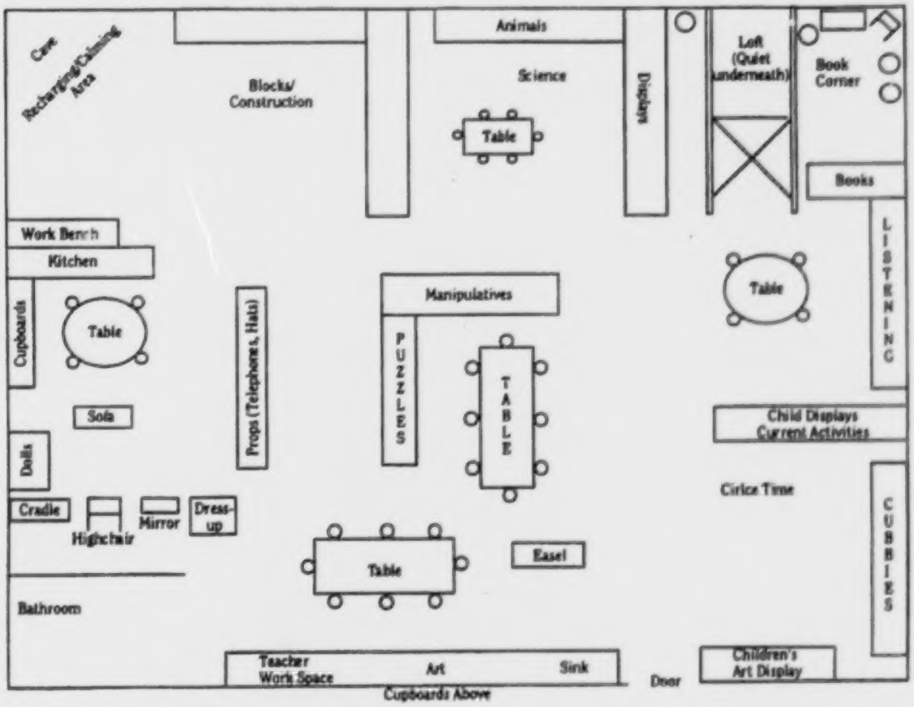
- Cash register, play money
- Posters from fast-food restaurant
- Plastic food
- Serving trays
- Paper fast-food containers
- Styrofoam cut french fries
- Aprons, hats, caps
- Menus
- Bags

Floor Plans


Dolls
Table
Dress Up
(Windows)
Circle Time
Teacher Storage
Science
Workbench
Play Kitchen
Housekeeping
Table
Clothes Hanger
BLOCKS
BLOCKS (Cars, Farm)
Sofa
Manipulatives Puzzles
Farm
Cars
Transportation
Stuffed Animals
Water/ Sand
Kitchen
Food Prep (Storage)
Chair
Chair
Listening Center
Sink
Changing
Books
Book Corner
Art
Table
Bathroom
Pillows
Table
CUBBIES
Storage
Easel
Easel

Some considerations in planning preschool environments

- Quiet areas should be separate from active/noisy are. For example, books should be separate from blocks or housekeeping.
- Centers should address all developmental areas: cognitive, language, creative, self-help, and socio/emotional.
- Children should be in full view at all times; there should be no tall blocking structures or blind corners.
- Furniture should be used to delineate activity and interest areas while allowing easy access.
- Large open areas should be avoided to reduce running and aimless wandering.


Cave
Recharging/Calming Area
Blocks/ Construction
Animals
Science
Table
Displays
Loft (Quiet underneath)
Book Corner
Books
LISTENING
Work Bench
Kitchen
Cupboards
Table
Manipulatives
Props (Telephones, Hats)
PUZZLES
TABLE
Table
Sofa
Dolls
Child Displays Current Activities
Circle Time
CUBBIES
Cradle
Highchair
Mirror
Dress-up
Table
Easel
Bathroom
Teacher Work Space
Art
Sink
Door
Children's Art Display
Cupboards Above

—Goff, P. (1993). *Effective practices for inclusive early childhood settings.* Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center.

NC Preschool Guidelines for 3- & 4-Year Olds

Indoor Environment

1. Windows that allow the children to see outside
2. Outdoor areas immediately accessible to the classroom
3. Good quality carpet covering at least one-half of the room, with the remaining area covered with tile, vinyl, etc.
4. Sink units (a double unit with warm water)
5. Appropriate size toilets, sink/countertop units, adjoining the classroom area
6. Appropriate, sturdily built furniture of suitable height for children's use
7. Child-level countertop space (a minimum of 20 feet is desirable)
8. Storage units—some free standing and mobile
9. Safety-covered electrical outlets, preferably every 8–10 feet
10. A safe place to hang coats and extra clothing
11. Cubicles or cubbyholes for each child's belongings
12. Display areas for children's work
13. Cushions and soft, comfortable furniture
14. A rich array of concrete, exploratory materials arranged in learning centers easily accessible to all children
15. Easily cleaned individual mats (at least 2 inches thick) for naptime
16. A phone in the classroom or within very close proximity

Outdoor Environment

1. An enclosed area, partially shaded, and separate from play areas for older children
2. Various outdoor ground covers (grass, sand, and pavement) with varied terrain
3 Large, open area for running and organized games
4. An outdoor area for planting
5. A variety of developmentally appropriate, securely anchored play apparatus
6. Storage area for outdoor equipment
7. Places for children to sit
8 Areas for sand and water play
9. Paved areas for wheel toys

Sample Schedule #1 for Preschool

8:00–8:30	Arrival and settling in. Children choose activities from centers.
8:30–9:00	Breakfast or snack served family style.
9:00–9:20	Circle time. In whole group, class shares songs, stories, poems, games.
9:20–9:30	Planning time. Class is divided into two groups, and children tell teacher or teacher's assistant how they plan to spend the morning.
9:30–11:00	Project or center time. Children choose activities and move freely from one place to another. Teacher and assistant work on projects with small groups or individual children. Documentation is recorded during this time.
11:00–11:10	Clean-up time.
11:10–11:20	Review time. Class is divided between teacher and teacher's assistant to review how children spent the morning.
11:20–12:15	Outside projects or extended time for indoor projects.
12:15–12:45	Lunch served family style.
12:45–1:30	Rest time. Children who do not sleep after a brief time may do quiet activities.
1:30–1:45	Circle time. In whole group, teacher or assistant reads aloud story or poems.
1:45–2:15	Outside or indoor projects or centers.
2:20–2:30	Dismissal.

Contributed by Deana Deason

Sample Schedule *2 for Preschool

8:00–8:30	Arrival, greeting parents
8:30–10:00	Children work on projects in progress
10:00–10:45	Quiet reading (Friday—share a book with a friend) Share block structure Snack Share children's completed work
10:45–12:25	Introduce • new activities • song or poem • brainstorm and plan for new projects Sign up for center choices Children write in journals, read/look at poetry books, update their book journals during this time First choice center time
12:25–12:55	Outdoor play
12:55–1:30	Lunch Monday & Wednesday—a parent is invited to read a story to class and stay for lunch
1:30–1:55	Rest Teacher reads aloud from chapter book
1:55–2:40	Share time Second choice center time
Monday 9:45-10:15	Music
Tu/Thu 10:50-11:20	Physical Education

*Times may vary within schedule, but order stays the same.

Contributed by Marilyn Ornstein

Sample Half-day Schedule

7:30-8:30	Arrival/free play
8:30-8:40	Clean-up/prepare for circle time
8:40-9:00	Circle time/planning time
9:00-9:45	Learning centers
9:45-10:00	Toileting/prepare for snack
10:00-10:20	Snack
10:20-10:30	Clean-up/prepare for outside play
10:30-11:00	Outside play
11:00-11:10	Clean-up/transition to inside
11:10-11:30	Free play
11:30-11:45	Good-bye circle
11:45-12:00	Children depart

Contributed by Paula Goff

Sample Schedule for Kindergarten

7:50–8:10	Welcome children individually or in small groups (guidance, language arts, social studies)
7:50–8:30	Conversations and/or choice of center activity, individual activity, or small group activity (guidance, language arts, social studies, math, art, science)
8:30–8:50	Group time (language arts, math, science, social studies, guidance) • calendar—weather • sharing—plan activities
8:50–10:20	Centers (social studies, math, communications skills, arts, science, guidance) Teacher and assistant work with children in centers • dramatic play • sand and water • arts and crafts • math • table activities • science • books/media center • woodworking • cooking • blocks • music
10:20-10:30	Clean up (social studies, health and safety, guidance, language arts)
10:30-11:00	Group time (arts, language arts) • music • finger plays • mime • poetry • stories

11:00–11:30	Lunch (11:00–12:00 teacher and assistant take 30 minutes each for lunch.)
11:30–12:15	Rest (health and safety, arts, language arts, social studies) • soft music • books
12:15–1:00	Centers See 8:50-10:20 above
1:00–1:20	Physical education (health and safety, social studies, math, communications skills, arts, science, guidance) Organized activity outdoors if weather permits
1:20–1:45	Outdoor play (physical education, health and safety, social studies, math, communications skills, arts, science, guidance) large toys—tricycles, building blocks, wagons climbing apparatus
1:45–2:30	Centers See 8:50-10:20 above
2:30–2:40	Clean up (social studies, health and safety, guidance, language arts)
2:40–3:00	Group time (social studies, language arts, guidance, science, math, arts) • Share day's activities • Evaluate day • Plan for next day

Contributed by Norma A. Kimzey

Fostering Positive Attitudes Towards Persons with Disabilities

Strategies	Sample Activities
Make sure that architecture, room arrangement, and materials can be used by all children.	Build a sandbox on legs so a child in a wheelchair can use it.
Suggest to children with and without disabilities ways they can interact with and learn from each other.	Help all children to learn sign language or other ways to communicate (pictures, communication board) and encourage them to use them throughout the day.
Use pictures, books, and dolls to increase knowledge about disabilities.	Have diverse children's books about people with various disabilities. Choose books that show people with disabilities doing many different things and do not focus on disabilities.
Assist children in becoming familiar with equipment and devices used by persons with disabilities.	Include items such as canes, walkers, or eyeglass frames in the housekeeping or dramatic play area. Use surplus devices rather than a child's personal equipment.

Strategies	**Sample Activities**
Provide experiences that enable children to learn about what different degrees of hearing, vision, or mobility are like.	Play a *feelie box* game where children use only their hands to tell what an object is. Encourage children with visual impairments to play and to offer helpful hints about how to identify objects that are not easily guessed by others.
Correct misconceptions and stereotypes about people with disabilities.	Listen for children's ideas about what persons with disabilities can and cannot do, and find examples to support or disprove their ideas. "We know persons who use wheelchairs can go grocery shopping because..."

From Wesley, P. (1992). *Mainstreaming young children: A trainig series for child care providers.* Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, Frank Porter Graham Child Development, Partnerships for Inclusion.

Including Children with Autism

Children with autism have a disability that makes it difficult for them to interact with others. Communication and behavior are affected. Characteristics may be different from child to child, but usually include the following:

- difficulty in understanding how to relate socially to others in an appropriate way
- difficulty with communication and language
- problems with understanding and processing sensory information
- "splinter skills"—they may be very high in some areas of functioning and low in other areas.

Autism affects the way the brain processes information; however, children with autism can learn to function successfully in school, at home, and in the community if given structured, individualized educational programs.

So, what can you do to best help children with autism?

First

Meet with the family and find out what you need to know.

- What are the child's interests?
- What activities does the child enjoy?
- What method of communication works best with this child?
- What is the child's typical daily schedule?
- In what way does the child interact best with others?

From Wesley, P., Dennis, B., & Tyndall, S. (in press). *QuickNotes: Inclusion resources for early childhood professionals.* Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, Frank Porter Graham Child Development, Partnerships for Inclusion.

Environment

1. Keep the environment organized by defining classroom areas visually. Use color, rugs, and furnishings to create individual areas. This helps to minimize sensory information and allows the child to be focused.
2. Use a visual schedule to help the child predict activities of the day. This will help the child move from one activity to another. Visual schedules can be made by using objects or pictures (whatever the child seems to understand) to represent different activities of his or her day.
3. Have a predictable, meaningful daily schedule. Most children with autism like routine, and it helps to keep their learning environment structured. If changes in the schedule are to be made, prepare the child for these changes with the visual schedule.

Teaching Strategies

1. Encourage non-verbal communication (i.e., allow the child to lead you by the hand for help, or to what he or she wants). This will teach the child that he or she can communicate with you successfully.
2. To help the child in a group setting, think of cues that you can give the child to make directions clearer and to teach social skills. For example, pass a special object (hat, button, sign, etc.) to the person whose turn it is, or set a timer for a minute to show how long to wait for a turn. The key is to make things as clear to the child as possible. The child with autism has a very difficult time with language, so it may be necessary to demonstrate what is expected.

From Wesley, P., Dennis, B., & Tyndall, S. (in press). *QuickNotes: Inclusion resources for early childhood professionals.* Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, Frank Porter Graham Child Development, Partnerships for Inclusion.

Interacting

1. Avoid using lots of verbal directions. Use objects, actions, and pictures to show the child what you want. Make verbal directions simple, and relate them directly to what is happening.
2. Plan to give the child another activity during long periods of waiting. For example, let the child hold a book or a favorite toy until it is his or her turn.
3. Some children with autism benefit from occasional "time away." Plan a short walk or engage the child in a quiet, small group activity away from the hubbub of a large group.

Resources

Autism Society of NC, Inc.	(800) 442-2762 or (919) 571-8555
Asheville TEACCH Center	(704) 251-6319
Chapel Hill TEACCH Center	(919) 966-5156
Charlotte TEACCH Center	(704) 342-6346
Greensboro TEACCH Center	(910) 334-5773
Greenville TEACCH Center	(919) 756-5488
Fayetteville TEACCH Center	(910) 437-2517
Wilmington TEACCH Center	(919) 251-5700

Source

Schopler, E., & Mesibov, G.B. (1995). *Learning and cognition in autism.* New York: Plenum Press.

From Wesley, P., Dennis, B., & Tyndall, S. (in press). *QuickNotes: Inclusion resources for early childhood professionals.* Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, Frank Porter Graham Child Development, Partnerships for Inclusion.

Including Children with Challenging Behaviors

All children can present challenging behaviors some of the time. Whether mildly annoying or harmful to others, children's actions reflect their feelings. Helping children learn to express their feelings in appropriate ways requires patience, consistency, and collaboration with others.

First

Children with challenging behaviors are different from one another. The techniques that are successful with one child may not work with another. In order for intervention to be effective, teachers must get to know the child and family and become a careful observer of the child in the classroom.

- Work together with the family to make sure the home and school environments are as positive and consistent as possible.
- Observe the child over time and in different settings in order to find out as much as you can about the child's actions.
- What exactly is the challenging behavior you want to address?
- Is the child hostile and aggressive?
- Does the child seem impulsive and unable to control his or her movements?
- Is the child disruptive or destructive?
- Does the child follow directions given by adults?
- Does the child seem anxious or angry?
- Develop methods of frequent and systematic communication with the family and others involved in providing services to the child in order to share experiences and effective intervention techniques.
- Try to understand any feelings the child may have that may be at the root of the behaviors.

From Wesley, P., Dennis, B., & Tyndall, S. (in press). *QuickNotes: Inclusion resources for early childhood professionals.* Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, Frank Porter Graham Child Development, Partnerships for Inclusion.

Arranging Space & Materials

1. Consider each child's needs when arranging the environment. For some children, it is helpful to screen out excessive noises or other distractions. For others, it is important to provide a continuous array of stimulating activities to keep them engaged.
2. Set up well-defined and attractive activity areas with pictures showing children using materials appropriately.
3. Provide adequate space that can be used throughout the day for active movement, especially on days when bad weather prevents outdoor play.
4. Provide plenty of duplicate toys to reduce problems with sharing and taking turns.
5. Provide a space for each child to keep personal belongings.
6. Provide a quiet place where the child can concentrate on activities free from distraction.
7. Provide a quiet place away from others where the child can go to calm down.
8. Label storage shelves and bins clearly and help the children understand the organization of classroom materials and toys. Assist them in cleaning up one activity before beginning the next.
9. Use visual aids such as carpet squares or tape to show the child a definite place to be during group floor activities or hallway transitions.
10. In new situations, stay near a child or try a gentle physical touch to help the child stay in control of his or her behavior. With some children, holding hands has a calming effect.
11. Provide a predictable environment. Stick to routines that work.

From Wesley, P., Dennis, B., & Tyndall, S. (in press). *QuickNotes: Inclusion resources for early childhood professionals.* Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, Frank Porter Graham Child Development, Partnerships for Inclusion.

Teaching Strategies

1. Ensure appropriate expectations for the child's age and development. Avoid overemphasizing academics during the preschool years and concentrate on promoting healthy social and emotional development and language. Ensure ample opportunity for the child to feel successful and competent.
2. Show the child he or she is a worthwhile person capable of developing self-control. You can demonstrate your confidence by creating systems for turn-taking or participation in activity centers. Such systems provide the child a chance to regulate his or her own behavior. Use such tools as a timer, a waiting list, or clothespin nametags indicating what center the child is engaged in.
3. Keep rules simple and few, and explain them clearly to the child (and family).
4. Provide clear, one-step directions. Begin the directions with the child's name in order to get the child's attention. When the child is looking at you, give the direction. Then allow adequate time for the child to comply, and watch for signs that the child is getting ready to follow the direction.
5. Develop procedures ahead of time for planned transitions between activities. Consider placing staff strategically in critical areas to assist an impulsive child.
6. Provide numerous opportunities throughout the day for all children to make choices about what they want to do. Do not phrase questions to seem like choices the children really don't have. For example, do not ask, "Would you like to put away the trikes and come in?" if there is no choice about coming inside.

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7. Walk through the routines of the day with the child. Show the child how to use the listening station — for example, how to put on the headphones and operate the tape player. Sometimes children are disruptive because they do not understand classroom routines and expectations.
8. Observe a child with a short attention span in various activities over many days. Find out how long the child's typical attention span is and plan activities for that length of time for that child. Be prepared to help the child choose the next activity before he or she leaves the first activity and starts to wander.
9. Maintain an awareness of the activities the overly active child sticks with the longest. Start with these activities in order to try to extend the child's attention span.
10. Increase a child's attention span by calling attention to unexplored aspects of an object or activity. Ask questions to continue the child's engagement with the activity **before** the child loses interest.
11. Offer to help the impulsive child plan his or her next move. Watch for signs that the child is ready to quit an activity and then offer choices of what to do next.

From Wesley, P., Dennis, B., & Tyndall, S. (in press). *QuickNotes: Inclusion resources for early childhood professionals.* Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, Frank Porter Graham Child Development, Partnerships for Inclusion.

Interacting

1. Give attention to the child when the child is behaving appropriately. Build the child's self-esteem through meaningful rewards and thoughtful comments that link the child's performance with his or her own efforts or abilities. Be aware that providing reinforcers such as stickers or candy may cause some children to depend on external reinforcement and to fail to recognize their own responsibility for their actions.
2. Avoid punishment that is derogatory or demeaning. Use punishments that are logical and natural consequences.
3. Speak at the child's eye level and look into his or her face.
4. Encourage the child to talk about his or her feelings, and to express them in various constructive ways. Consider rehearsing alternate acceptable responses to feelings at a time when the child is not being disruptive or aggressive.
5. Get to know the child's unique signals of frustration, overstimulation, or anger. If possible, help the child identify his or her own behaviors building up to a lack of control. Work with the child to develop a special signal showing that you are aware he or she needs assistance or a change in activity.
6. Redirect or provide simple, new directions to the child that name the desired behavior and help the child refocus. For example, say to a child who is painting on the wall, "Here is some paper to paint on if you would like to paint." Use a calm, but firm voice.
7. Provide ample warning when an activity is about to end.

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8. Meet with staff to discuss specific procedures to manage some children's behavior. Such a program is developed and documented after observing the child over time and noting the circumstances leading to and following the challenging behavior. Keep records and review the procedure frequently to ensure consistency across staff, revising as needed.
9. Use a time-out procedure in which the child is removed temporarily from the group as a last resort. Make any decision to use a time-out procedure jointly with the family, other teachers, and the program administrator. Write down the time-out procedure and document every incident. Explain the time-out procedure to the child before using it.
10. Communicate regularly with family members and other adults working with the child to establish consistency and to share ideas.

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Including Children with Special Communication Needs

All young children need stimulation and encouragement as they learn to communicate. Providing a language-rich environment is the hallmark of developmentally appropriate practice. Some children who have language delays or disabilities may need additional help.

First

Meet with the family and find out what you need to know.

- How does the child communicate at home?
- What tips can the parents share for encouraging communication in the classroom?
- Is a speech/language therapist working with the child?
- Can this person visit your classroom to work with you and the child?
- Are there problems with articulation (pronouncing words) or language or both?
- Are pictures, symbols, or manual signs used?
- Communicate regularly with the people who are involved with the child.
- Discuss expectations and strategies in order to be consistent across settings.

Environment

1. Create an environment that encourages the child to explore. Include a variety of toys and materials, and rotate these periodically.

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2. Ensure the environment is set up to require the child to initiate some communication. For example, occasionally put a favorite toy out of reach and require him or her to "ask" for it. Introduce a novel toy and encourage the child to respond to its presence by vocalizing, labeling, or describing it.
3. Incorporate the child's means of communication into daily routines. If communication boards, pictures, or devices are used, be sure the necessary classroom objects, people, and routines are represented. For example, draw pictures to represent the various songs sung during circle time. Let the child choose a song by pointing to the pictures and trying to name the song. If signing is used, use it along with speech throughout the day with all children.
4. Respond enthusiastically to the child's communication attempts so that you establish a climate of successful communication. Help him or her to feel good about communicating in order to keep trying.

Teaching Strategies

Self talk

Talk about what you are doing. Describe what you see, feel, hear, smell, and taste. ("I am opening the door." "I hear a bird outside the window.")

Parallel talk

Describe what the child is doing, feeling, hearing. ("You're jumping off the step." "You are crying. You must be sad.")

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Imitation

Imitate the child's actions, vocalizations, and words.

Naming

Label things in the child's environment—objects *("doggie, ball")*, actions *("go, walk")*, locations *("on, under")*, descriptions *("big, pretty")*, etc.

Modeling

Say words correctly for the child. *(Child: "bu," Teacher: "bubble")*. Say sentences in a more grammatically correct form for the child *(Child: "He throw ball," Teacher: "He throws the ball.")* Say words and phrases you think the child might want to say to you or others *("I want one." "Let's trade.")*.

Expansion

Listen to what the child says and expand on it. (Child: *"ball,"* Teacher: *"big ball"*; Child: *"more cookie,"* Teacher: *"I want more cookies."*)

Asking questions

Ask simple questions with younger children: *"What is it?"* and more difficult questions with older children: *"Why did the boy fall down?"*

Prompting for a higher level of communication

Respond to the child's communication with gestures, models, hints, and directives to elicit a desired response or to elicit a higher level of communication. (A child who can talk reaches for juice and grunts. Teacher asks, *"What do you want?"* The child doesn't say anything. The teacher says *"Say 'juice,' please."*)

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Prompting for more appropriate communicative behavior

Attempt to identify the communicative intent of a child's undesirable behavior (e.g., hitting, screaming, or grabbing), and prompt the use of words or gestures to attain the goal in a socially acceptable manner. (After eating lunch, the child kicks the table. The teacher asks, *"Are you done?"* The child says, *"Yes."* The teacher says, *"Tell me, 'All done, down please.'"*)

Prompting for communication with peers

Prompt the child to communicate directly with a peer about a problem instead of complaining to a teacher. (Child says, *"He took my truck."* Teacher responds, *"Tell him, 'That's my truck.'"*) Teacher may direct a child to find out a peer's needs rather than presume them. (An older child starts to take off a younger child's jacket. The teacher says, *"Ask her first if she wants help."*)

Interacting

1. Be patient, don't interrupt or finish the child's sentences.
2. Pay attention when the child is speaking. Act interested and enthusiastic.
3. Model appropriate rate and rhythm. Rather than saying *"slow down"* or *"think about what you are saying,"* try responding to the child in a slow, deliberate, but meaningful way. Giving constant directions about how to speak may be frustrating and make the child think his or her speech is never good enough.
4. Help other children learn to use communication boards, pictures, or manual signs.

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5. Create reasons for the child to communicate, such as
    - "forgetting" something necessary (e.g., a spoon at snack time)
    - doing something surprising (e.g., brushing teeth with an oversized toothbrush)
    - "sabotaging" activities (e.g., putting lid to bubble jar on too tight so that child must ask for help).
6. Talk, talk, talk! Remember that a child is learning language even when he or she is not speaking.

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Including Children with Hearing Loss

Hearing loss ranges from being very mild to profound deafness. Understanding how much a child can hear and whether this is different in each ear, or changes over time, is an important first step to helping children with hearing loss.

First

Meet with the family and find out what you need to know.

- How much, if any, can the child hear?
- What does the proper care of assistive listening devices involve?
- Are there symptoms of ear infections you should watch for?
- What method of communication works best with the child?
- Communicate regularly with the family about the child's needs and skills.

A child with hearing loss will use one of the following methods of communication:

- American Sign Language (ASL) — a visual/gestural language used by people who are deaf
- Auditory-Verbal — the development of spoken language through the use of assistive listening devices
- Cued Speech — the use of hand cues along with natural mouth movements of speech to visually represent spoken language
- Oral — the development of spoken language through the use of assistive listening devices and speech reading (lip-reading)

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- Total Communication — a combination of communication methods which may include sign system, lip-reading, finger spelling, use of assistive listening devices, speech, and sometimes Cued Speech

Environment

1. Use visual cues to signal transitions. For example, turn the lights off when it is time to prepare to leave the room, or shut the blinds as naptime approaches.
2. Point to the source of sound that causes a change in the situation. For example, point to the door to indicate a knock at the door which must be answered. When possible, provide visual cues for environmental sounds such as flashing light to indicate the fire alarm.
3. Place mirrors strategically about the room so the child is reminded of activity that is happening behind him or her that he or she cannot hear. Sometimes children who cannot hear can get lost in their own worlds without the benefit of sound cues that provide valuable information about the environment.
4. Avoid standing with your back to a window while talking because of the incoming glare that could block the child's view of your lips. Be mindful of shadows and dark areas (e.g., lights off at naptime) that make it difficult for children to read facial expressions. Avoid speaking with your back to the child.
5. Stand still rather than move around the room while speaking.

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Teaching Strategies

1. If the child uses signing, use it along with speech throughout the day with all children.
2. In learning sign language, start with signs for objects and actions that are commonly referred to at home and in the classroom. Begin by signing the key word in a sentence, for example *"eat"* to indicate, *"It's time to eat snack."*
3. Exaggerate signs somewhat to help the child understand their meaning. Use facial expressions to convey meaning as you sign. Use more sweeping gestures or a bigger signing field to convey the concept of bigness.
4. Keep talking! Use regular speech: simple sentences, normal intonation, stress, and pauses. Be aware of and use body language and facial expressions.
5. Encourage the child to communicate. Reinforce all attempts, even small ones like an open mouth.
6. Encourage the child to ask questions and get your attention in appropriate ways when help is needed.
7. Give the child opportunities to explore rattles, tuning forks, mobiles, and soft toys. Vibrations and other tactile sensations are important for the child who may not hear the sound a toy makes.
8. Provide the child with opportunities to explore books without words, books and videotapes with sign language, and open-captioned videotapes.

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Interacting

1. Be sure the child sees your lips. Look into his or her eyes when speaking.
2. Speak naturally. Do not exaggerate your words and lip movements or speak more slowly than usual.
3. Use gentle touch to get the child's attention before giving individual or group instructions.
4. Help other children learn how to get the child's attention by touching politely.
5. Help the child to answer questions about his or her hearing loss and to explain to the other children about assistive listening devices.
6. Train and model a polite attitude in the other children concerning the child's assistive listening devices. **Do not** allow children to pull on the devices.
7. Encourage and train children to use sign language. This is a lot of fun for other children just as learning any new language is!
8. Allow the child adequate opportunity to respond. The child may need extra time to formulate responses.
9. Be aware of how frequent and meaningful the child's interactions with others are. Promote social interactions by planning activities that include the child and another child.
10. Model an attitude of acceptance and inclusion by creating opportunities for the child to participate in all activities.

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Including Children with Visual Impairments

There are many ways to help children with visual impairments to feel comfortable and secure in the classroom! Creating a safe, predictable environment with constant landmarks is important, and talking with the family is a great way to get started.

First

Meet with the family and find out what you need to know.

- Has the child always had a visual impairment?
- Is the child's vision stable?
- Does he or she have a progressive condition?
- Does he or she use visual or tactile cues primarily?
- How independent is the child?
- What strategies have the parents used to help the child feel secure in exploring the world?
- Does the child wear glasses or contacts; and if so, how does one care for them?
- Are there any symptoms of eye disorders one should watch for?
- Communicate regularly with the family about the child's needs and skills.

Environment

1. Establish a predictable environment. Don't move furnishings or change floor levels without telling the child.
2. Help the child learn where to expect toys or clutter on the floor.

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3. Help the child locate interest areas and toys by putting raised symbols or pictures at the entrance to specific areas, on shelves, on the floor, on walls.
4. Use sound to identify areas of the room and playground. For example, hang soft chimes from the jungle gym or keep a special musical toy in the cozy corner; include blocks that make noise when you shake them in the block area.
5. Encourage the child to learn to use natural landmarks to get around. Allow the child to practice without your guidance and to have opportunities for practice when other children are not in the room.
6. Eliminate sharp or pointed objects, especially at face level. Avoid using throw rugs which could easily trip children.
7. Use helpful suggestions from the family and specialists for setting up indoor and outdoor play areas. Think of your own ways to increase orientation and independence and to ensure safety in different settings. Introduce the child to a new environment by using a familiar and obvious point of reference in the room, such as a door. Relate major features of the room to the reference point.
8. Eliminate background noises and other auditory distractions whenever possible to help the child focus on important information.

Teaching Strategies

1. Encourage the child to use any vision he or she has. Use appropriate lighting and contrasting colors (black blocks on a white tray, for example) to maximize the child's vision.

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2. Combine vision with touching, smelling, shaking, listening, and tasting experiences. Name everything the child touches. Describe the way an object feels, smells, sounds, tastes, and where it is in the room.
3. Always talk about what you are doing, about actions and objects. Be sure to tell the beforehand if you plan to touch or pick up him/her.
4. Help the child find the location of sounds. Offer praise and encouragement when the child makes even a slight pause, hesitation, or movement in response to sound.
5. Play games that involve rhythm and movement so that the child can feel your movement and his or her own.
6. Encourage the child to explore the room and find sounds and objects. Ensure the child sees and feels **all** parts of an object and understands the relationship of the part to the whole. Show him or her, for example, the handle, top, and "jack" in a jack-in-the-box.
7. Help the child learn to store auditory information by practicing listening. Play games that involve sequences, discrimination and memory such as Simon Says.
8. Place toys and materials at the child's chest level to encourage good posture. Children with visual impairments often do not hold their heads up to look at their surroundings and may develop a stooped posture.
9. Provide tactile books and/or objects to replace visual information presented to other children.
10. Consult a specialist about the child's need for orientation and mobility and braille readiness.

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Interacting

1. Use words and touch to let the child know you are present and listening.
2. Continue to use words like "see" and "look" in your everyday speech, but be sure the child has ample opportunity to use all five senses to "see."
3. Support the child's attempts to explain his or her vision to the other children. Sometimes it's helpful to "practice" with the child in private what she or he might answer in response to the questions of others.
4. Sit beside or behind the child as you help him or her explore an object so that you can guide her hands in a natural way and accurately describe direction (left, right, back, front, etc.)
5. Encourage the child to let you know when he or she needs help.
6. Include the child in all activities and remember the importance of modeling an attitude of acceptance and inclusion.
7. Use his or her name when you are talking to the child to get the child's attention.
8. Let the child know when you are entering or leaving the room.
9. Facilitate the child's play opportunities with sighted peers to assist the child in initiating and maintaining social interactions.

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Including Children with Physical and/or Mental Disabilities

Some children have disabilities which affect both their physical and mental development. Other children may have only a physical disability or a mental disability. It is important to remember to address each child's needs individually. Many of the strategies for helping children with physical disabilities are helpful in addressing the needs of children with mental disabilities as well. It is important, however, not to assume that children with physical disabilities also have mental disabilities.

First

Meet with the family and find out what you need to know.

- What are the things the child can do?
- What does he or she need help with?
- Are specialists such as physical therapists or speech-language therapists working with the child?
- Can they also meet with you?
- Will they be working with the child in your classroom?
- Are there recurring illnesses or health crises that must be watched for?
- Communicate regularly with the people who are involved with the child.
- Share observations and strategies for promoting progress.

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Environment

1. Make room for and integrate any special equipment. For example, make sure a prone stander can fit in the housekeeping area. Allow space for a corner chair or bolsters in blocks. Include pull-up bars or handrails where needed. Teach other children to respect this equipment.
2. Arrange the room so that special therapies are meaningful. If a child could benefit from learning to maneuver his or her wheelchair independently, encourage this at a time when other children are moving from one place to another, rather than during a special physical therapy session away from the mainstream. In other words, use the natural surroundings and routines to stimulate and reinforce work on any special goals.
3. Provide a fun, but predictable environment. Stick to routines that work for you and the child. Provide varied learning experiences within those routines, but take care not to overload the child. Use natural cues to prepare the child for transitions. For example, allow the child to smell food being prepared for lunch or turn off the lights while nap preparations are made.
4. Consider the child's need for privacy. For example, if a four-year-old uses diapers, can the changing area be screened?
5. Consider the child's need for rest. Some children tire rapidly and will need a place to rest while activities continue in the classroom.

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Teaching Strategies

1. Make sure the child is enjoying play in a productive way by encouraging the functional and appropriate use of objects. For example, if a child is waving a toy car back and forth in the air repeatedly and without apparent purpose, help the child push it on the floor or table. Encourage children to use objects in combination (spoon in bowl, cup to doll's lip).
2. Create frequent opportunities for the child to enjoy using all five senses to experience the world.
3. Position the child with severe physical disabilities for maximum range of motion, muscle control, and involvement with the group. If other children are sitting on the grass, take the child out of the wheelchair and onto the grass! If circle time happens on the floor, use wedges or pillows to support a child with physical handicaps on the floor. If other children sit at a table for lunch, figure out a way for this child to sit at the table. Place the child in many positions throughout the day.
4. Stress independence, especially in eating, dressing, and toileting. Work with the family and therapists to achieve consistency in expectations and strategies.
5. Break activities down into small steps and be aware of how many of those steps the child has accomplished. If other children are "dressing up" in Housekeeping, help the child without dressing skills to think of something she can do to join in the fun, like pretending to put on make-up or trying on a bracelet.
6. It may be necessary to find a treat or reinforcer the child really likes and use it for a while to reinforce appropriate behaviors, even if changes are very small. Fade the use of the reward to avoid creating the child's dependence on tangible reinforcers.

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7. Help the child use new skills with different persons in a variety of places and with many materials.
8. Encourage the child to make choices. For example, hold up different foods or toys in order for the child to select the one preferred.

Interacting

1. Assume the child understands more than he or she can tell you. Never talk about the child in front of the child unless in a positive and supportive way. ("You should see the colorful painting Jocelyn made!")
2. Use simple, short sentences when speaking to the child; and use words consistently, especially during routines.
3. Get on the child's level to communicate. Use eye contact and touch to calm the child and to "set the stage" for conversation.
4. Be on the look-out for communicative behaviors from the child such as eye contact, hand or arm movement, muscle tension, or vocalization. Allow enough time for the child to take his or her "turn" in a conversation.
5. Follow the advice of family and therapists in using pictures, signing or other methods of communicating with the child.
6. Give the child a reason to communicate by putting a favorite toy out of reach or "forgetting" a cup or spoon at lunch.
7. Be aware of how frequently and meaningfully the child interacts with other children in the room. Think of ways to promote this interaction. For example, suggest a role for the child with special needs when other children are pretending or give the child a popular toy to play with and encourage others to ask if they can have a turn.

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8. Help children understand the implications of major health problems they experience. Be open, and encourage them to discuss or act out (in play) their feelings. Children who understand what is happening with their bodies are better able to let others know about early signs of illnesses.
9. Answer questions about any special equipment used by the child and help the child to do the same. Encourage other children to ask permission before pushing a wheelchair. Create opportunities for them to touch and try out the special equipment, if that is okay with the family. Include items like a walker, crutches, bolsters, or eye glass frames in the housekeeping area for pretend play. (Note: These should not belong to any one child because other children should not be encouraged to play regularly with special equipment that belongs to someone. Rather, the items included in Housekeeping should be extras.)
10. Include the child in all activities. Model for the children an attitude of acceptance and inclusion.
11. Study and use methods to prevent back strain in lifting and moving children who have physical disabilities.
12. Follow the advice of families and therapists in positioning the child for maximum participation with the persons and objects in the environment.

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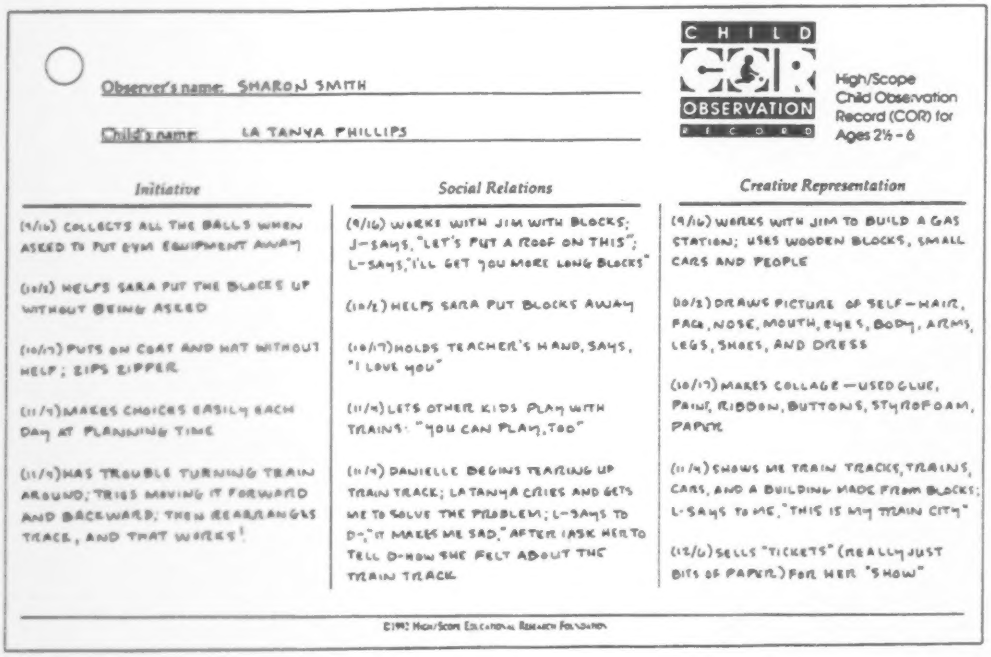
Child Observation Record (COR)

Sample COR Anecdotal Notecard, front and back.



High/Scope Child Observation Record (COR) for Ages 2½ - 6

Observer's name: SHARON SMITH

Child's name: LA TANYA PHILLIPS

Initiative	*Social Relations*	*Creative Representation*
(9/16) COLLECTS ALL THE BALLS WHEN ASKED TO PUT GYM EQUIPMENT AWAY (10/2) HELPS SARA PUT THE BLOCKS UP WITHOUT BEING ASKED (10/17) PUTS ON COAT AND HAT WITHOUT HELP; ZIPS ZIPPER (11/9) MAKES CHOICES EASILY EACH DAY AT PLANNING TIME (11/9) HAS TROUBLE TURNING TRAIN AROUND; TRIES MOVING IT FORWARD AND BACKWARD; THEN REARRANGES TRACK, AND THAT WORKS!	(9/16) WORKS WITH JIM WITH BLOCKS; J-SAYS, "LET'S PUT A ROOF ON THIS"; L-SAYS, "I'LL GET YOU MORE LONG BLOCKS" (10/2) HELPS SARA PUT BLOCKS AWAY (10/17) HOLDS TEACHER'S HAND, SAYS, "I LOVE YOU" (11/4) LETS OTHER KIDS PLAY WITH TRAINS: "YOU CAN PLAY, TOO" (11/9) DANIELLE BEGINS TEARING UP TRAIN TRACK; LA TANYA CRIES AND GETS ME TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM; L-SAYS TO D-, "IT MAKES ME SAD." AFTER I ASK HER TO TELL D-HOW SHE FELT ABOUT THE TRAIN TRACK	(9/16) WORKS WITH JIM TO BUILD A GAS STATION; USES WOODEN BLOCKS, SMALL CARS AND PEOPLE (10/2) DRAWS PICTURE OF SELF—HAIR, FACE, NOSE, MOUTH, EYES, BODY, ARMS, LEGS, SHOES, AND DRESS (10/17) MAKES COLLAGE—USED GLUE, PAINT, RIBBON, BUTTONS, STYROFOAM, PAPER (11/4) SHOWS ME TRAIN TRACKS, TRAINS, CARS, AND A BUILDING MADE FROM BLOCKS; L-SAYS TO ME, "THIS IS MY TRAIN CITY" (12/6) SELLS "TICKETS" (REALLY JUST BITS OF PAPER) FOR HER "SHOW"

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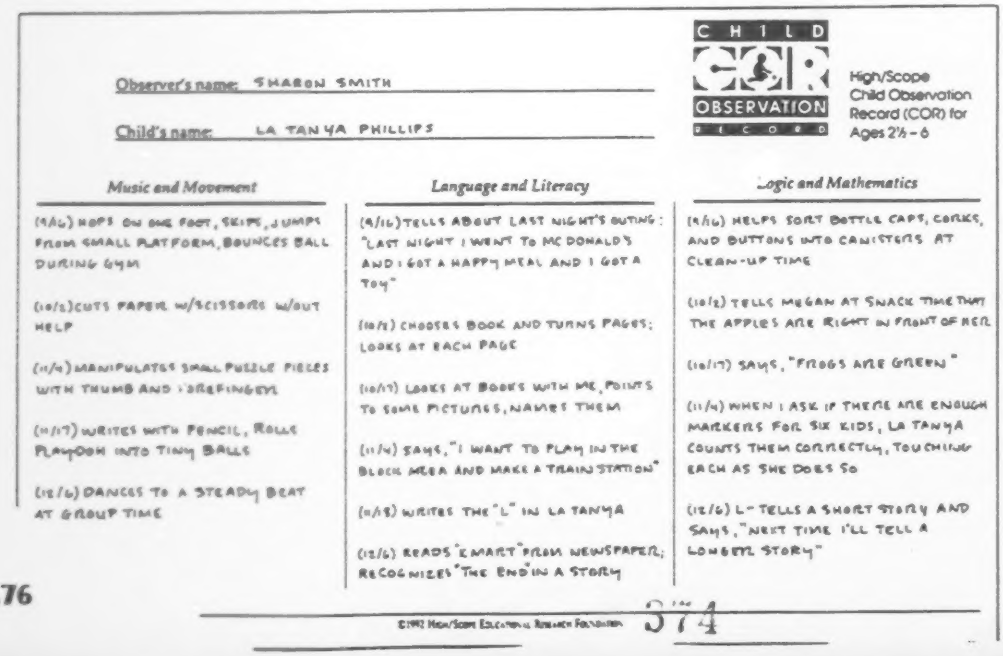

High/Scope Child Observation Record (COR) for Ages 2½ - 6

Observer's name: SHARON SMITH

Child's name: LA TANYA PHILLIPS

Music and Movement	*Language and Literacy*	*Logic and Mathematics*
(9/16) HOPS ON ONE FOOT, SKIPS, JUMPS FROM SMALL PLATFORM, BOUNCES BALL DURING GYM (10/2) CUTS PAPER W/SCISSORS W/OUT HELP (11/4) MANIPULATES SMALL PUZZLE PIECES WITH THUMB AND FOREFINGER (11/17) WRITES WITH PENCIL, ROLLS PLAYDOH INTO TINY BALLS (12/6) DANCES TO A STEADY BEAT AT GROUP TIME	(9/16) TELLS ABOUT LAST NIGHT'S OUTING: "LAST NIGHT I WENT TO MC DONALD'S AND I GOT A HAPPY MEAL AND I GOT A TOY" (10/2) CHOOSES BOOK AND TURNS PAGES; LOOKS AT EACH PAGE (10/17) LOOKS AT BOOKS WITH ME, POINTS TO SOME PICTURES, NAMES THEM (11/4) SAYS, "I WANT TO PLAY IN THE BLOCK AREA AND MAKE A TRAIN STATION" (11/18) WRITES THE "L" IN LA TANYA (12/6) READS "K MART" FROM NEWSPAPER; RECOGNIZES "THE END" IN A STORY	(9/16) HELPS SORT BOTTLE CAPS, CORKS, AND BUTTONS INTO CANISTERS AT CLEAN-UP TIME (10/2) TELLS MEGAN AT SNACK TIME THAT THE APPLES ARE RIGHT IN FRONT OF HER (10/17) SAYS, "FROGS ARE GREEN" (11/4) WHEN I ASK IF THERE ARE ENOUGH MARKERS FOR SIX KIDS, LA TANYA COUNTS THEM CORRECTLY, TOUCHING EACH AS SHE DOES SO (12/6) L-TELLS A SHORT STORY AND SAYS, "NEXT TIME I'LL TELL A LONGER STORY"

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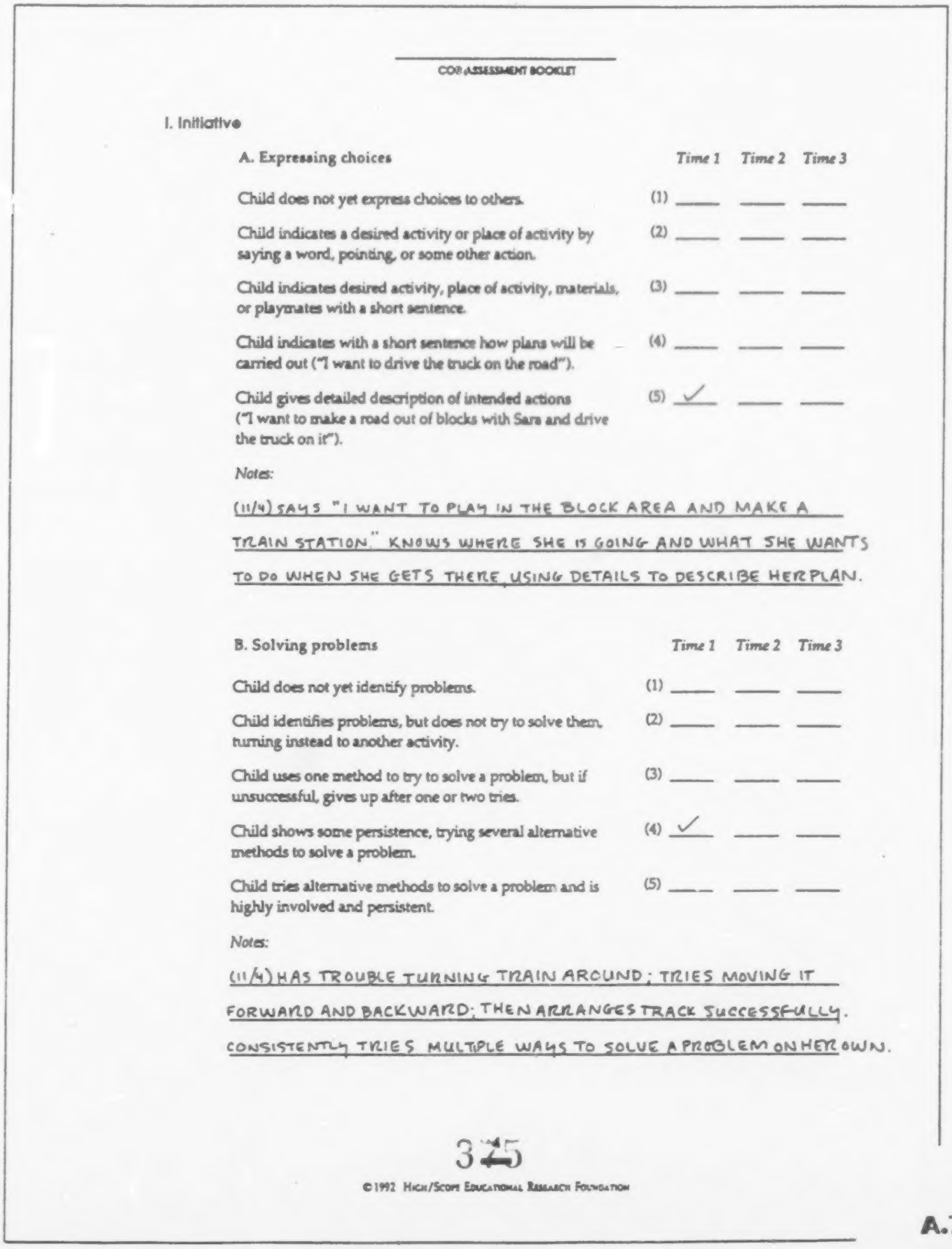
Sample page from the COR Assessment Booklet.



COR ASSESSMENT BOOKLET

I. Initiative

A. Expressing choices		Time 1	Time 2	Time 3
Child does not yet express choices to others.	(1)			
Child indicates a desired activity or place of activity by saying a word, pointing, or some other action.	(2)			
Child indicates desired activity, place of activity, materials, or playmates with a short sentence.	(3)			
Child indicates with a short sentence how plans will be carried out ("I want to drive the truck on the road").	(4)			
Child gives detailed description of intended actions ("I want to make a road out of blocks with Sara and drive the truck on it").	(5)	✓		

Notes:

(11/4) SAYS "I WANT TO PLAY IN THE BLOCK AREA AND MAKE A TRAIN STATION." KNOWS WHERE SHE IS GOING AND WHAT SHE WANTS TO DO WHEN SHE GETS THERE USING DETAILS TO DESCRIBE HER PLAN.

B. Solving problems		Time 1	Time 2	Time 3
Child does not yet identify problems.	(1)			
Child identifies problems, but does not try to solve them, turning instead to another activity.	(2)			
Child uses one method to try to solve a problem, but if unsuccessful, gives up after one or two tries.	(3)			
Child shows some persistence, trying several alternative methods to solve a problem.	(4)	✓		
Child tries alternative methods to solve a problem and is highly involved and persistent.	(5)			

Notes:

(11/4) HAS TROUBLE TURNING TRAIN AROUND; TRIES MOVING IT FORWARD AND BACKWARD; THEN ARRANGES TRACK SUCCESSFULLY. CONSISTENTLY TRIES MULTIPLE WAYS TO SOLVE A PROBLEM ON HER OWN.

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Checklist Grid

NC General Statutes.1506 and .1507

Preschool Transition/ Placement Committee

A. Overall Function. The preschool transition/placement committee is a combination of the Administrative Placement Committee, School-Based Committee, and the Individualized Education Program Committee. It provides an interagency framework for evaluating data, for making decisions regarding eligibility, and deciding the most appropriate placement for children referred for special education services. It ensures a multi-disciplinary evaluation by a team or group of persons, including at least one teacher or other specialist with knowledge in the area of suspected disability. The preschool transition/placement committee may divide into a subcommittee to facilitate the transition/placement process. The preschool transition/placement committee is responsible for receiving referrals; involving parents in the planning and decision-making process; obtaining parental permission for assessment; initiating or reviewing screening and evaluation procedures; evaluating information; and seeing that an individualized education program for preschool children with disabilities is developed and reviewed at least annually. The preschool transition/placement committee functions and committee composition for developing the individualized education program and determining placement shall be in accordance with Section.1512. The local education agency has legal and fiscal responsibility for ensuring the provision of special education and related services to three-and four-year-old children with disabilities and those five-year -old children with disabilities who are not eligible for kindergarten; therefore, decisions concerning the placement process ultimately remain with the local education agency.

B. Composition. Members of the preschool transition/placement committee include the following:

*(1) parent(s), guardian, or surrogate;
*(2) referring agency personnel or teacher or representative from current service provider if the child is enrolled in an early intervention or preschool program;
*(3) director of programs for exceptional children or a designee from the local education agency other than the child's teacher who shall be qualified to provide, or supervise the provision of, specifically designed instruction to meet the unique needs of the child, and who is able to commit financial resources;
*(4) teacher qualified to provide special education;
*(5) a person knowledgeable about evaluation results who may be a psychologist or a developmental evaluation center representative;

These members shall be involved when the individualized education program is being developed and placement decisions are being made. At least one member of the preschool transition/placement committee should be of the same race and sex as the child being referred.

Other members may be selected from the following:

(6) principal or designee:
(7) social worker;
(8) guidance counselor;
(9) speech-language specialist;
(10) physician or school nurse;
(11) physical therapist;
(12) occupational therapist;
(13) area agency representatives or involved professionals, as appropriate;
(14) potential service providers;
(15) other individuals at the discretion of the agency or parent;

C. Responsibilities of Preschool Transition/Placement Committee. The preschool transition/placement committee shall:

(1) establish procedures consistent with the infant-toddler program for children transitioning to the preschool program to ensure that:
  (a) upon notification by the infant/toddler service coordinator, available information on children who may be referred for preschool services is reviewed by the LEA;
  (b) there is participation by the LEA representative at the transition planning meeting convened by the infant/toddler service coordinator; and
  (c) the LEA assumes responsibility for all eligible children on their third birthday.

(2) receive referral information for children, either served or unserved by the LEA;

(3) ensure that all parent rights are followed after an initial referral is made (Section .1517). All communication with the child's parent or guardian shall be in the native language or dominant mode of communication of the parent or guardian, including an interpreter for parents who are deaf;

(4) ensure that children with disabilities receive a diagnosis and evaluation appropriate to meet educational or developmental needs after receipt of written consent from parent and guardian; if a child is screened or evaluated by staff in programs in the Department of Human Resources or the Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources, the screening/evaluation results shall be presented to the preschool transition/placement committee of the local education agency where the child resides.

(5) ensure that information from appropriate evaluations and sources is documented, reviewed and interpreted with appropriate evaluation personnel to determine eligibility, classification, and placement of a child in a special program. If the evaluators cannot be present at the preschool transition/ placement committee meeting, their written reports are to be made available;

(6) ensure compliance with due process procedures in Section .1517 concerning the identification and placement of a child in a program for exceptional children and provide due process procedures in writing to the parent(s) or guardian;

(7) ensure that an individualized education program is developed within 30 calendar days of the eligibility determination. For children transitioning from an infant-toddler program to the preschool program, the individualized family service plan (IFSP) may be used in place of the individualized education program if all of the components required on the individualized education program are present, if all of the required components of the IFSP are present, if the individualized family service plan continues to be appropriate, and if the parents agree to its use.

(8) invite parents to the meeting at which the individualized education program will be developed, provide assistance that will enable them to participate to the fullest extent they desire, and document all attempts to involve parents in the IEP process;

(9) ensure that written notice which meets the requirements of Section.1517 is given to parents prior to the placement or denial of placement and the provision of a free, appropriate public education;

(10) ensure that written consent for initial placement in a program for children with disabilities is obtained from the parent or guardian and that the parents have been involved in the development of the individualized education program for the preschool child with a disability;

(11) ensure that the individualized education program for a child with a disability will follow the child from one setting to another;

(12) ensure that the teacher(s) of children with disabilities receive a copy of the individualized education programs for the child with a disability and pertinent information and technical assistance necessary to implement the individualized education programs;

(13) ensure that twelve months after placement, and at least annually thereafter, are a review of progress is conducted for each child placed in a special education program. The preschool transition/placement committee must make decisions regarding revised individualized education programs for children with disabilities and make recommendations concerning continuation of the programs; and

(14) ensure that eligible children with disabilities are placed in appropriate special programs within 90 calendar days of receipt of referrals, unless the parents refuse to give consent for evaluation and/or placement.

Issues in Early Childhood Education

Patricia S. Miller 1997

Social, economic, ethical, and moral issues place early education on the brink of a major shift in its purpose and orientation in the United States. Child care and early education cannot be seen as separate entities. The dramatic rise in need for quality programs for young children and the demographic projections for the future mandate careful attention to the role and function of planned environments for very young children. We must insure that our goal of quality early education is for all children, not just for some children.

Early childhood education can no longer be driven by expectations of early development alone. Politicians and corporate America are invested in the development of a competent work force for the 21st century. Planners must consider the responsibility of early education to the community and the society at large as they develop policy and a new vision for the field.

Decisions regarding how, when, where, and with whom young children spend the first years of their lives must be made ethically and with serious deliberation as to the intended outcomes for the child, the family, and the society. Research and practice have revealed many current and emerging issues in the field of early childhood education which require consideration. Some of these issues follow.

Quality

When early educators think of quality, they think of all of those standards related to teaching, curricula, relationships with children and families, and professional performance. Regardless of the specific model used in the classroom, there are indicators of quality which are supported throughout the literature. Such indicators include the following:

- There must be a range of appropriate teaching and learning methods that match each child's developmental needs, interests and culture.
- Curricula should be based in the core professional knowledge and should be theoretically driven.
- The quality curriculum is dynamic and flexible, always open to the changing needs of the group and of the individual child.
- Qualified teachers reflect the highest standards of competence described by professional associations.
- Quality programs consider teacher-child ratio, group size, and the physical environment as important factors in learning for young children.
- Quality early childhood programs are responsive to varying abilities and needs for structure as children adjust and grow to meet the changing expectations of their world.
- Personnel are specially trained and see the relationship with each child as the key to success.
- Quality programs invite every child to learn and embrace all prior experiences of the child and family with respect.
- In high quality programs, developmentally-appropriate and ethically-based practices create environments in which every child is valued for being unique.

- Quality means that adults have the knowledge and skills to implement research based practices.
- High quality programs for young children reflect the value that children have many ways of learning and of expressing that learning.
- Teachers observe and assess children's development systematically and collect evaluative data routinely as part of the daily curricular activities.
- Qualified early education teachers have considerable knowledge about the issues of equity and diversity in education.
- An indicator of quality in early education programs is the commitment by adults to ongoing professional development.
- Quality in early education is linked to partnerships with families in all aspects of the program.
- Quality programs use flexibility in grouping patterns such as multi-age, multi-year groupings for children.

Equity

The issue of equity in opportunities for children to develop and learn is fast becoming one of our most prevalent educational concerns. This issue includes consideration of what those opportunities should be and whether all children are equally worthy of these opportunities. Early childhood education will assume the role of initiating social and economic expectations with each young child. Issues of equity, early childhood education and the future of our society are inextricably linked.

Early childhood educators must be knowledgeable about the social construction of bias and prejudice, and about the role of teachers in empowering children toward change. Early education programs must raise the banner of equity as they seek to provide power through knowledge in every child, regardless of race, gender, language, social class, ability, and cultural differences.

Diversity

The extent to which the teacher honors diversity is reflected in every daily activity and throughout the learning environment. The early childhood curriculum should evolve from careful consideration and analysis of all components for any potential harmful effects toward any child. The curriculum should represent a proactive process of planning for inclusion of diversity in abilities, race, gender, culture, language, social class, and age. Good classrooms are learner-centered communities, communities of people who care about and support each others' learning. Schools must be restructured to respond to diversity. Otherwise, the early education program will continue the traditional practice of placing poor and minority children at risk of school failure.

Teachers' understanding of the social context for learning and development in young children has made heterogeneous groups and cooperation, rather that competition, desirable goals in early childhood education. Children who learn to help and care for each other grow up to be adults who help and care for each other. Successfully meeting the needs of children with varying abilities and experiences in a group is one of the most important expectations and challenges for the early education professional.

Young children have both shared needs and special needs. Caring teachers start right where each child and family is in terms of development and culture. Caring teachers plan for children to express learning in many different ways. Caring teachers consider cultural competence as well as competence across developmental domains to be important indicators of the child's abilities and potential for learning.

Creating Active and Successful Learners

Many children reach the age of five or six feeling inadequate and powerless to control their futures. These children may see themselves as unworthy of respect and not at all valued by society. Many of these children will drop our of school or complete public schooling and join the ranks of the growing numbers of unqualified and unmotivated people in our work force.

On the other hand, children at age five who feel adequate and powerful have learned that they can do things, and do them well. They feel safe to take risks because adults have supported their individual needs to understand and to investigate things around them. They can become engaged in academics because they have progressed in a developmentally appropriate way. They have the knowledge that we deny to many of our otherwise capable children.

The issue is whether early childhood education can accept the social responsibility to do what we know how to do for the sake of the "common good" of the society. Ensuring that early childhood educators have both the child's life today and the child's life in tomorrow's world in mind at all times is an over arching goal for education today.

Teachers can create in the young child a sense of belongingness, of being important to the group, of wanting to explore and solve problems. The child who is encouraged, who feels cared about and safe, will take risks in an environment designed to respond to her learning needs. Successful risk taking over and over builds self esteem, motivation, and the belief in oneself as a learner.

Poverty

When nearly 25% of America's children are born into poverty, poverty must be identified as a major issue in early childhood education. Many children will not enter an organized preschool setting until they are four years old. Schools and teachers have the responsibility to be ready for children whose experiences may not have informed them about the things valued by the middle class institution called "school."

Preparation for teachers and administrators should include understanding the cultures, the homes, the daily routines, the families, and the life of each child, in order to be able to invite every child to learn and grow to his/her optimal potential. Educators should examine their own values and beliefs about whether all children have the ability to learn and succeed in this society and deal honestly with biases, stereotypes, and issues that may have detrimental effects on children. Because of the increasing challenges in early education, the early education professional ought to confront his or her individual fitness for the early childhood field.

Accountability

Good early childhood educators work with parents and policy makers to describe the learning outcomes they desire. They describe goals or intended outcomes of the program that are based in knowledge of typical and atypical development, and in the knowledge of social and cultural influences on development. Assessment and evaluation practices should be clear and should reflect monitoring of the progress of each child in relation to predetermined learning goals.

Teachers need to be conscious of their responsibility to monitor the growth and development of each child in the group. Data is collected routinely and shared with team members, parents, and children. Program evaluation and evaluation of teacher performance are linked to developmental outcomes based on each child's learning objectives.

As part of accountability, quality programs employ personnel who are grounded in the knowledge base and standards of the profession. Programs evidence progress towards continuous quality improvement and implement plans for routine evaluation. Evaluation results in appropriate changes in the program and in teaching methods.

Family Involvement

An issue in early childhood education today is the extent to which families should be involved in the planning and implementation of the curriculum. Expectations for more involvement by parents in the education programs for their children are increasing. With these expectations comes the need for teachers to be prepared to communicate an invitation to each family to participate in different ways. Families should serve on the program planning teams and should be active decision makers.

Curriculum

Curriculum is what children learn, how they achieve their learning goals, and the contexts of both teaching and learning. A central role for teachers is to motivate children to want to explore, investigate, and problem solve. Teachers motivate children by planning content worthy of children's attention and based on real things in their world, things that stimulate every child's natural impulse to explore and find out about things. The learning environment ought to be inviting to **all** children.

The early childhood curriculum should be "child centered," that is, reflective of the teacher's genuine efforts to know the children and to arrange the environment based on what each child needs to know and to do. The content of the developmentally sound curriculum is derived from 1) the teacher's knowledge about what the children need, 2) the individual child's assessed needs and interests, 3) cultural and family contexts, and 4) the knowledge and skills required by a democratic society. Goals of the program and of each child's educational plan should reflect these four elements.

Which curriculum model is best? How can we recognize a good curriculum model? Perhaps at issue is not the adoption of a single model but more of an understanding of multiple models and what might be best for one particular group of children. No one model can fit the learning and developmental needs of a given group of children. Early education programs occur within individual social, political, and economic contents.

The curriculum must be flexible and inclusive of each child. At issue is the integrity and cohesiveness of the curriculum. Is the curriculum founded on particular philosophical and theoretical principles regarding how children learn, the role of the child and adult in learning, the expected outcomes, and the roles of maturation and the environment in learning? Do all staff agree on the guiding principles and behave accordingly? How does the curriculum respond to the cultural, racial, gender, social class, and language issues in society?

Children from the poorest communities should have the same opportunities for learning concepts and skills that insure success in the mainstream society. Social skills and self-regulation strategies should be an important part of the early childhood curriculum. Teachers must assume responsibility for teaching children the social skills they may not have learned prior to coming to school, rather than blaming the child or referring the child for special education.

All children have the right to equal learning opportunities, teacher competence, and learning resources. Teachers should serve as advocates to ensure equity in curriculum content and resources.

Collaboration

The problems that so many children face in growing up are serious challenges to the adults who share responsibilities for nurturing, guiding, and teaching them. Parents and teachers have long sought partnerships on behalf of young children. The times in which we live demand that more adults collaborate in the best interests of the children. Early childhood teachers can forge linkages with other child and family services in the community.

Early childhood educators come from a variety of disciplines and expect to share responsibility for the learning and development of children with other professionals and families. Teams in early education may include the teacher, a parent, an early interventionist, a physical therapist, a school administrator, a communication disorders specialist and others. Each team member contributes expertise and shares in the planning for children. Specialized therapies (e.g., PT, OT, SLP) are best implemented in the regular class and during all daily routines.

Businesses and community agencies should be involved in the early childhood venture. Businesses may provide materials, assistance, and other resources and may be involved in setting long range goals for a competent work force.

Schools will be increasingly seen as resource centers for families. Comprehensiveness in services to children and families may include health, social services, nutritional, and other family related services. Goal One of the Education 2000 goals is quite specific about this kind of comprehensiveness in services to young children and their families. Teachers, community college personnel, colleges and universities should work together with the community to develop policies for young children.

Discipline
Discipline continues to be the number one concern of teachers even in early childhood settings. When children enter school without the social and language skills required to succeed in groups, they need teachers who recognize their need for learning and for support. Teachers need to be knowledgeable in behavior management and motivation strategies for young children. If they do not understand the importance of prior experience in children's behavior, they may decide that the child has a behavior problem.

Teachers need to facilitate the unlearning of unsuccessful behaviors and the learning of more successful behaviors. They do this by modeling, encouraging, and a direct teaching of the appropriate behavior. First and foremost, teachers must know that young children are the mirrors of their experiences. If they want that reflection to be different, then they must change the experience, and give the child the time and patience they need as they learn. Children who do not have a minimal level of social competence by the time they are six years old will have continuing problems later on. Teachers must consider the development of social competence as a critical area of teaching responsibility before they refer the child to someone else.

Discipline comes from within, not from without. Teachers can impose natural and planned consequences while the specific teaching is occurring. Children must understand and be able to describe and demonstrate the few class rules in order for those rules to be effective. Teachers should have formal training in positive management with young children. Physical punishment is never appropriate for young children.

Inclusion

Given a quality learning environment, children with typical and atypical needs will learn and grow best together. Increasingly early education classrooms will include children who have identified delays or disabilities. The qualified early education teacher will expect to serve a wide range of abilities and needs and will have formal preparation for teaching in settings which are inclusive of a broad range of diversity. Teachers should access support services to assist them in their work to maintain each child as a member of the classroom community.

Qualified early education teachers consider differences in all children to be worthy of celebration. Research continues to support the finding that children with and without disabilities benefit when they learn together and that children with disabilities achieve especially in the areas of social and language development.

Drugs

Children who have been exposed to addictive drugs inutero often demonstrate attention and behavior problems. The research on working with these children suggests that drug exposure may not be the discrete cause of behavior. Research has shown that the environments from which these children come and the experience in their early years are similar to those of other children who may not have been exposed to drugs. Teachers who are successful with children who come to school lacking the skills required to function in the middle class environment use the same teaching strategies with children who have been exposed to addictive drugs. They identify the skills needed and then begin to plan ways for the child to learn those skills.

Teaching Methods

Implementing a high quality early education curriculum requires the skill and knowledge of highly qualified teachers. The research reveals that the teacher is the key to success in early education. Some of the methods used by qualified teachers follow.

- Assessment and curriculum practices are based in theory and research about how children grow and learn.
- Teachers effectively use a wide range of pedagogical methods to meet the needs of a diverse group of children.
- Methods used include a range of teaching practices appropriate for children who need various levels of structure.
- Teachers make data based decisions about when and how to use teacher directed and naturalistic learning opportunities.
- Qualified teachers examine their values, biases, and beliefs concerning groups of children before entering the classroom, thus accepting the moral and ethical responsibility of nurturing and supporting the development of every child.
- Good teachers expect to work with children and families who have very different values and experiences from their own and are able to meet each child and family where they are in life and to move forward together.
- Good teachers see each child as enriching the learning environment and plan the curriculum in ways that proactively celebrate differences.

Assessment Practices

Qualified teachers use multi-source, multi-method assessment practices to learn about each child over time and in various settings. Naturalistic observations guided by formal checklists and other developmental guidelines are the appropriate practice for gathering information during the normal daily routines. Authentic demonstrations and artifacts are used to support progress reports.

Assessment should only be conducted when it benefits the child and never to find ways to separate the child from his or her peers or to label the child. Purposes for any assessment should by clear and determined in advance of the practice. Assessment should be part of daily instruction and result in the systematic recording of the child's progress.

Assessment should be related to important learning goals for the group and for the individual children. Methods should be appropriate to young children's experiences at home and school and should always by based on current levels of development and social competence. Without consideration of prior experiences and learning opportunities, erroneous assumptions may result in discriminatory decisions.

Transitions and Continuity

Families and children in North Carolina should be assured that as they transition from one level of educational program to another the continuity has been planned. Standards of quality such those provided in the *North Carolina Guide to Early Years* should be disseminated widely and expected across settings serving children ages three through seven.

When families move from an infant/toddler program, they should expect the teachers and administrators in the new program to assist them in making a smooth and supported transition. Prior services and programs should be considered in planning and continuing developmental sequence for families and children, beginning where each child and family happens to be.

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NORTH CAROLINA GUIDE FOR THE EARLY YEARS

EVALUATION

How would you rate the information in Chapter 1—How Do I Get to Know the Children in My Class?

Very Useful Not at All Useful

5 4 3 2 1

How would you rate the information in Chapter 2—What Do I Teach?

Very Useful Not at All Useful

5 4 3 2 1

How would you rate the information in Chapter 3—How Do I Teach?

Very Useful Not at All Useful

5 4 3 2 1

How would you rate the information in Chapter 4—How Do I Assess the Children's Progress?

Very Useful Not at All Useful

5 4 3 2 1

How would you rate the information in the Disciplines section?

Very Useful Not at All Useful

5 4 3 2 1

How would you rate the information in the Appendix?

Very Useful Not at All Useful

5 4 3 2 1

What publication would you like us to develop next?

Please send your response to:
Early Childhood Section
Department of Public Instruction
301 N. Wilmington Street
Raleigh, NC 27601